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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[MARK LEAVES THE NEST.]

THE GOLDEN APPLE: OR, CHRISTMAS WITH THE SHERSTONS.

CHAPTER XII.

Oh! what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive!

Scott.

"THERE'S no use wasting breath about it—the thing must be done. Let the boy marry her, and treat her kindly too—though I'll risk impositions. I'll give her my magic secret to ensure good behaviour, and she's too much like me; she'll look out for her rights, I'll warrant you. But she loves him—any one with half an eye can see it. If he chooses, he can be happy with her; and what a grand, handsome lady she will make. So just fix the day, will you?"

"But Mark knows nothing of this; we must wait till Mark returns. And then, what can I do if he refuses?" asked Mr. Sherston. "Do you think I can force him to be miserable?"

"I have told you how it will be if the lad does not marry Jessie, and that right speedily. I shall trumpet forth to the world what I have kept to myself so long. I wonder if the lad will prefer what will be in store for him, then, to taking my handsome Jessie for his wife?"

"Have you no mercy—are you pitiless?" groaned Serle Sherston.

"I've worked among the rocks so much, I admit, I've grown somewhat into their nature. Man, do you not know me yet? I tell you this thing shall be done, or I will ruin you all, though in doing so I bring my own neck to the halter."

Mr. Sherston shuddered, and then exclaimed fiercely, as even worms will turn at last:

"Oh, that you had shown me this filthy nature before it was too late. Oh, that you had spoken, when

there was no one but myself to be brought to shame and misery! But no! you smoothed over every hideous look—you talked in oily accents of your friendship for me. You wound your toils pitilessly around me, until I was bound hand and foot. Oh, miserable dupe that I was! I was amazed, delicious with fear and horror; not with vindictive passion and crime, and your specious reasoning deluded me. And yet I was innocent. Yes, yes, in heaven's sight I was innocent of the horrible crime you accuse me of. It was but the bitter unforeseen result of passion. I would have died myself any time to have saved him. You know it, cruel, pitiless man! How dare you threaten me so?"

"A fine story! What will the world—what will judge and jury say to it, Serle Sherston?" was the cold, sneering response.

His wretched companion wrung his hands.

"Oh, that I had boldly confessed my error, and its unfortunate but unpremeditated result! I loved him like a brother. Oh, that it had been for me to die, and Werner to live! But you, wily deceiver! it was you who pointed out the fatal pathway for me—who steeped my soul in craven silence. Ah, were it not for my pure-hearted wife, my noble-minded boy, how gladly would I defy you now to do your worst!"

The hard-hearted listener, by his side laughed scornfully; but another, crouched down among the bushes, was noisily wiping the torrent of tears which flooded out the angry sparkle of those luminous eyes, not only for them, but for evermore, in the case of Serle Sherston.

"I think these idle ravings may be dispensed with. The question is, shall I go forward with my deposition, and bring disgrace and shame to those you love, and a shameful death to yourself; or shall I go off to Australia, leaving all hands prosperous and happy—no change in the household except that Mark has a very smart and affectionate wife?"

"If it might only end in that way," groaned Sherston, sinking back into his weakness and fear.

"There is nothing to hinder it; if the boy will not hear to your wishes, just show him the case. I should say that was an end of the matter."

"To make my own son—he so strong and chivalric—to make him despise me! Oh, bitter indeed is the cup I must drink!" groaned the tormented man, anew.

"Try the mother, then. I notice he yields to her wishes at once."

"My poor, poor Ernestine! is your love strong enough to survive such a shock? Man, you will drive me to flinging myself into the sea! That would disarm your power, if not your malice!"

"I should explain your reasons to the widow and heir," icily remarked his pitiless master.

"I will ascertain from Mark as soon as possible whether he will fulfil the wishes of his miserable father. I cannot talk any more to-night," cried Sherston in a voice of desperation.

And without waiting for an answer, he darted away.

The Australian walked to and fro, rubbing his hands together.

"All will glide smoothly if that accursed wizard be not the one I fear."

And saying this he walked slowly away.

The moment he was gone, the tall form emerged from its hiding-place, and shaking his clenched hand in the direction of the retiring Australian, the wizard exclaimed in a low, but wrathful voice:

"Ay, but the wizard is here, thou evil vulture, gorging thyself on the misery of others. The day of reckoning is nearer at hand than you think! It is a good evening's work I have done."

And saying this, he took Mark's portmanteau from its snug stowage in a lilac bush, and walked swiftly away, taking care to keep in the shade of the trees, till he was safely on the beach.

He reached the Nest quite late in the evening, but

found the patient and his nurse in fine spirits, busily talking.

He walked up to Mark's lounge, and examined the bruised limb. He found it with a quantity of herbs bound round the foot.

"Ah," said he, "old Marjorie has been at work! Where is she now?"

"Nobody knows, I am sure. She came in just before dark, and showed me about the herbs. But she was in an awful mood, and I was thankful when she went back to her hut," answered his daughter.

"The creature is growing demented. I am almost afraid to trust her, for fear she will fly at us like a wild cat, when we little expect it. And yet I have been more a friend than a master," said the wizard, thoughtfully.

Then laying his hand on Mark's shoulder, he said, in a voice that was almost solemn:

"Young Eagle, I have executed your errand; but I have done better than that. I have likewise unravelled a tangled skein. I have cleared the error of years as many and more than your age can count; and I that went out with fierce hate, thirsting with revenge and intense bitterness, come back tender, forgiving, pitiful."

"Oh, my father, that is the most beautiful of all," cried Oriole, flinging herself into his arms with a burst of joyful tears. "Ah! I know as well what it meant."

As he bent his lips to the pure forehead, the wizard asked, tenderly:

"And what does my daughter believe its meaning?"

"Freedom and flight for the Oriole," answered she, gaily.

"Silly, silly birdling. Dost thou not know the world, which looks so fair and tempting, has many a sickening scene as well as the peace and innocence of the solitary nest upon this craggy height?"

Mark thought it the most charming scene he had ever witnessed, quite a contrast to the one his imagination presented when he was roused, the next morning, by hearing old Marjorie's shrill voice in the fiercest vituperation, outside the cottage, to which the deep tones of the wizard responded, calmly and patiently:

"Marjorie, thou foolish old woman, does it help thee at thy tasks, to rail so with thy tongue? What dost thou feed thyself with on thy long absences? Wormwood and gall, I should judge, by the humour in which thou returnest."

"I will mix something worse for thee, tyrannical old wizard. I hate thee, and this barren old island, and I will leave it speedily."

"With all my heart; but thou must fulfil my purpose first. Remember that, Marjorie, so long as our compact is uncancelled thou must obey me. Thou dar'st not refuse. Go now to the fire, and carry in this water I have brought."

There came to Mark the sound of the wizard's retreating steps, and in a moment he heard the old woman shuffling along.

He watched her curiously as she unclosed the door and came limping in with a pitcher of water.

What a hideous old creature she was! The scarlet hood was her inseparable companion, and the iron-grey witch-locks, streaming beneath it, were always untrimmed and matted.

Her bowed figure and faltering gait would have awakened his sympathy, but for the angry, sullen glare of her eye.

"Drudge, drudge, drudge!" muttered the old crone. "And he tells me none of his secrets, but keeps me for his work all the time. I won't bear it! I'll know why he came here! I'll take his heart's blood."

She shrieked out the words in that shrill voice of hers, all the time brandishing the little hatchet lying beside the pile of kindling wood before the stove, until Mark suddenly fancied her one of the Furies let loose from Hades.

He did not wonder the tenderly affectionate father began to be afraid to trust the vindictive old creature near his lovely daughter.

"What is the matter, Marjorie?" ventured Mark, as her fury began to subside a little.

She turned like a wild cat, hissing:

"What does it matter to you, haughty-face? Why are you here, making more work for a tormented old woman? You had better be at home with your lady-love, the proud-eyed Jessie."

Mark laughed. "Now, Marjorie, you have made an awful mistake! you've unsettled my faith in your powers, and your previous prediction made me think you almost infallible. Jessie is no lady-love of mine."

"But you are to marry her—that is the belief. The Australian says so. The father declares it; the mother will consent, the lady was willing long ago."

Mark laughed contemptuously.

"I think all those you have named could not accomplish such an union without a bridegroom."

"And he?" demanded old Marjorie, leaning forward, and peering into his face.

"Would resist such an arrangement to his dying day."

"We shall see! we shall see!" murmured Marjorie. "There be weighty reasons. Why should you not comply? The girl is well enough—you have seen none to eclipse her, or to win your love."

"Pshaw, Marjorie! you have lost your gift, or you would know you speak wrongfully," answered Mark, pettishly.

The old crone shuffled along toward him, shaking her long forefinger threateningly.

"You have not been so foolish as to fall in love with this little silly pet of my master's—this little prisoned Oriole?"

Mark was half frightened at the question, remembering his helpless position, but he answered boldly:

"She is not silly. I shall count it the highest honour and the dearest success if I can win her."

At that moment from without called the deep-toned voice of the wizard.

"Marjorie! Marjorie! come and get this pitcher of water."

The woman whirled about, and went hobbling through the door.

Before she returned, Oriole, looking as bright and fair as her namesake bird, flitted through the doorway, and came at once to Mark's side.

"I hope you rested nicely; but I heard Marjorie railing, and I am afraid she disturbed you. I am so used to her ways, I pay no attention to them."

"I am very comfortable, thank you. Your father came to me several times in the night, and I was wide awake when Marjorie came."

"She has made everything ready for me—you shall see me get breakfast, after I have brought you a basin of cool water."

When breakfast was ready, Marjorie took a plate, heaped it with food, and went off with it, calling out as she went:

"Master Wizard! Master Wizard! Come to your breakfast!"

The wizard came in a few moments, and wheeled Mark to the table, placing beside his plate a splendid bunch of grapes.

CHAPTER XIII.

Here is a mystery, truly! Oh, for some clue!

But I will watch him warily. *Mrs. Draxton.*

MR. KINMOUTH spent the next day in learning the particulars concerning the Wizard's Isle. His eye brightened when he heard of the old fortune-teller, and her animosity to her master.

"I shall have lost my wits if I cannot make use of this tool!" muttered he, as he returned to the Manor, strengthened in his belief that the wizard was, as Jessie suggested, the marplot individual alone able to disturb his plans.

Jessie seconded his apparently careless proposal to visit the Isle the next day, and a small company was selected to accompany them on the plea of learning their fortunes from old Marjorie.

The weather, however, prevented. For a whole week it rained incessantly with a high wind, extremely dangerous for the sail boats required to reach the island.

The same reason gave Mr. Sherston excuse for not submitting the proposed marriage to the decision of his absent son. But they were miserable, restless days at the Manor for all, from the host to the impatient guest, from the anxious wife and mother to the excited, uneasy Jessie.

But at the Nest they were halcyon hours for the young lovers, who were scarcely aware that the rain beat around them, and the strong wind shook their frail retreat.

For some hearts years might fail to teach such mutual knowledge of each other's nature as these two learned in the long, calm days of the single week. It seemed that every day had stamped all the sweetness and joy, and worth of a year upon the fleeting hours.

The wizard left them as much as possible to themselves, and called Marjorie away whenever she made an excuse for entering the cottage. The lower cave was very comfortable, with a fireplace in which the wizard kept a blazing fire to dry off the dampness of the rainy weather.

The boat appeared with the party from the Manor the moment the storm passed away.

Of course they were seen the moment they rounded toward the reef, and due preparations were made for their reception.

Mark perceived that old Marjorie was not without love of money, for she began counting heads and fees before the boat landed, rubbing her hands together in witch-like glee, exceedingly revolting to him.

The wizard shut himself up in his cave and would

not stir; so the field was left clear to Marjorie. And well she improved it.

Mr. Kinmouth had managed that Jessie and himself should be last to consult the witch, so the others had dispersed, if not from sight, at least out of hearing, when he gave his hand into the clutch of the long, lean fingers of the fortune-teller.

"Tush, good woman," said he, "I have no doubt of your skill, but of the past you'll only tell me what I know myself, and into the future I care not to look. You can benefit me by other services."

While he spoke he carelessly drew from his pocket a handful of shining gold pieces, and as he tossed them on his palm, he watched with satisfaction the greedy glow breaking over Marjorie's face, and the nervous clutch her fingers seemed to give toward the tempting gold.

"Have you a mind to tell me the truth concerning this wizard of yours, my good woman?" began the Australian, artfully. "If you will, I shall make over to you these little shiners very readily."

"What is he to you? What do you care about him?" asked Marjorie, testily.

Mr. Kinmouth made a bold move; counting upon the truth of the story concerning her enmity to the wizard, he was willing to bring malice to aid avarice.

"If he is the man I think, he is a foe I detest," replied he.

Old Marjorie pushed away the grey looks from her eyes, and looked at him eagerly.

"You don't mean that you are the man he vows to be revenged upon? Do you come from the proud Manor yonder?"

"I am his enemy, unless you can prove he is other than the man I suspect. I have heard he treats you unkindly."

"He does, he does; he puts me blindly to his work, and he tells me none of his secrets. I hate him with a witch's enmity."

"Ah, now you talk sensibly. And if I give you an abundance of gold, are you ready to aid me against him to the extent of your power? Mark me, to the very extent of your power."

She stretched out her hand for the money.

"Let me see that it is genuine, that there is no cheat about it."

He gave it into her hand. She tossed it up and down, flinging the pieces together and laughing merrily at the music it made for her ear.

"Ask me your questions," said she, holding it, without offering to return it.

"Does this wizard seem familiar with the country around here?"

She nodded.

"Ay, ay, he knows every path, every crack and crevice, for fifteen miles about."

"Can you tell me his true name?"

She shook her head fiercely.

"Didn't I say he would not tell me anything? But I guess this much; the Manor yonder is the one house he watches closest. Ay, and I have heard him mutter the master's name there, and spit out the word with fierce venom, and hint of bygone days, and a great wrong. All that I can tell you."

"It is enough," cried the Australian, clenching his hands; "he is the man, and you say, woman, you love him not."

"I said not that!" cried she, in her shrill voice.

He looked dismayed.

But shaking her staff fiercely, she added, with a wild vindictiveness:

"I said I hated this wizard of the island. He makes a slave of me; let him beware. I shall turn into a serpent yet, and my bite will be venomous indeed."

"The very person for me," murmured the Australian, exultingly.

"Woman, I will heap up the gold in a pile, if you will put him from my path. You may gratify your hate, and you may make your fortune, both at once."

Old Marjorie looked around her eagerly.

"One that can see cannot always hear. The wizard is deep in his cave, yet such words should be spoken in lower tones. How can the thing be done? he has twice my strength as I have good reason to know?"

"You a witch and ignorant of the fatal potion? Yet would I rather give it to you myself, for I should be sure it would not fail. Do you not mix his drink, prepare his food?"

"Sometimes; it can be easily managed, but I must have the gold first."

"The half, but not the whole; when you show me that you have succeeded, I will count out the whole."

"And the potion, how shall I get it? When must it be done?"

"Can you come to the beach below the Manor to-morrow night? I will be there with the tiny powder which will remove this necromancer from your

path and mine, and let it be done as speedily after as possible."

"You will make the thing sure? all the powers that be help me, if the wizard finds me—if the dose be not powerful enough!" said the old woman anxiously.

"You need not fear that. To-morrow night at the beach you shall have the powder and half the gold."

"I shall be there?"

"You will not fail me?"

He laughed scornfully.

"Have I not said it? Here before you both I swear that the wizard of the isle shall perish—or the fortune-teller. One of us must die, it has come to that at last. I have warned him often enough. We cannot both exist in the same sphere."

She shook her head fiercely, dropped her uplifted arm, and went hurrying away.

Jessie had heard every word, had understood the whole meaning of the dialogue.

Her face was somewhat pale, but calm, and untroubled. She was willing to accept her bridegroom through this iniquitous proceeding if there were no other alternative.

Truly the same blood ran in their veins. Even then the Australian chuckled, recalling the fact, and paused to pat her shoulder in his rough caressing way.

"My handsome Jessie! a good girl, with steady nerves, not one of your soft sickening women. You inherit the family traits. Well, you shall have the reward soon, for this is the sole obstacle, and you see how speedily it will be removed."

Jessie did not answer but slowly joined her companions, young people from the neighbourhood. They loitered around the island to gratify their own as well as Mr. Kimmouth's earnest wish to get a peep at the wizard.

Perhaps he suspected their object, and to be rid of them as speedily as possible, he came forth from his cave.

They were all in sight of it when he made his appearance.

The Australian fell back in the rear—though not quite as far as Rufus White—watched sharply every movement, and carefully scrutinized the face of the wizard.

Without a word to any one, and only a careless wave of the hand, as acknowledgment of their presence, the wizard stalked slowly by them, and went down to the beach.

The party, in a moment or two, followed after him. They found him leaning against a rock, gazing tranquilly across the water.

The boldest of them ventured to address him.

"We've had a long storm; was it not tedious on the island, sir?"

"Opinions vary concerning the same circumstances," answered the wizard, in his deep, full tones. "Solitude would be trying to you; too much company is the most tedious of all things for me."

The speaker, somewhat discomfited, withdrew, amidst the suppressed laughter of his companions.

A sudden resolve came to the Australian, and he stepped forward instantaneously to act upon it.

"I beg your pardon, my good sir, but your face has a familiar look. I really think I have met you before. Have you ever visited Australia?"

That luminous, magnificent eye turned upon him calmly, went slowly and deliberately over his whole person, came back again to his face and settled there, as the wizard replied indifferently:

"There is nothing about you striking enough to induce pleasant remembrance. I do not retain evil recollections. It matters very little whether you saw me in Europe, Africa, or Asia, first or last, since it hath profited neither of us."

Mr. Kimmouth was able to restrain the outward exhibition of his rage by the inward exultation over the promise of old Marjorie.

He only responded briefly, "As you please about that," and returned to Jessie's side, whispering, in response to her questioning look:

"It is he, beyond question. I am glad Sherston did not come."

And presently the whole party entered their boats and took their departure. Then the strange master of the island walked to and fro along the pebbly shore, lost in deep reflection.

"Well," exclaimed he, after an hour's meditation, "I think I can baffle him, crafty as he is. Yet somehow a foreboding of ill seems to sink upon my heart. I can count upon Mark's help. I am sure, if it be necessary to tell him all. How fortunate I carried his boat to the cave to ride out the storm. They cannot suspect his presence here. Events have certainly favoured me. I have no fears of Serle, but I want those proofs for the world. How can I get them? If old Marjorie were only what she was once, I should have no fear but she could get them out of him. Ha, what is this? a boat returning—the arch villain may be in it, there is no crime too great for him. I had better retreat."

He moved cautiously to a thicket, evidently tangled

and matted together for the purpose of concealment, but in a moment came out again.

It was Rufus White in the boat, and he was quite alone. He came up the ledge, tarpaulin in hand, bowing every other step.

Whatever effrontery other people might exhibit, the worthy sailor was not going to risk the evil eye for lack of respect and deference.

"I beg your pardon, your highness—hem—your worship. I don't mean to intrude, but—a, one of the ladies left her parasol, and sent me after it; and beside, your worship, I have a letter for Mister Mark; the mistress was anxious for him to get it to-day, and I hope you won't be offended at my boldness. I wanted to know myself how he is getting along. You said I wasn't to let any one know where he was, so I didn't give the letter when the rest was here, and I hid the parasol on purpose to make 'em send me back. And I mean no disrespect. I never have, your highness."

And concluding his lengthy speech, jerked out with a profound bow accompanying every pause, Rufus produced the letter, and looked as if he expected to receive an electric shock when the letter passed from his hands into that of the dreaded wizard.

The latter could scarcely conceal his amusement, but he answered kindly:

"You have done rightly, my good fellow. Your young master is particularly anxious that his friends should remain ignorant of his residence here. I will give him the note at once."

Rufus fidgeted. He was not sure but his audacity would precipitate him at once into all the horrors of the boiling cauldron he had a vague idea must exist somewhere on the island, but still, in heroic friendship, he ventured to ask:

"If you please, your worship, it is no disrespect I mean, but I should like to see Mister Mark with my own eyes, to make sure he is safe."

"But I told you he was hurt; he can't come to you for several days yet," was the somewhat astonished reply.

"And couldn't I go to him? He's a likely lad, and I've loved him like a son; it's laid heavy on my mind that I should be keeping it a secret when, maybe—begging your pardon, I mean no disrespect you know—maybe he wasn't so smart as I supposed."

The tears stood in the honest eyes as Rufus finished. The wizard could not resist them.

"Man," cried he, suddenly, "if I trust you, will you swear by the eternal heavens to keep sacred silence upon all you see. Not alone for my sake, but for the welfare of your young master himself? I have respect for your fidelity to him, I am willing to trust you, if you promise."

"Ah, that will I, your worship; and a heavy weight will it take from my mind to see young Mister Mark smart and cheerful like."

"Come, then," responded the wizard, and led the way along the beach to a narrow path, which he followed some distance, and then turned into what seemed to the obedient Rufus an impenetrable wilderness.

The superstitious sailor was not in the least surprised to see the bushes swing aside like gates, the very trees walk out of his path, as it seemed; but when at last the Nest was reached, and the wizard flung open the door, he was fairly transfixed with astonishment.

There sat the youth he had pictured as pining away beneath a mysterious disease, or gloomily enduring imprisonment, with sparkling eye and glowing face, sketching the features of a very charming model, who sat demurely before him with crossed arms, but roguish eyes and saucy lips.

"Shiver my timbers, if that don't beat Neptune and all his mermaids!" ejaculated the worthy sailor.

Mark turned in astonishment, while Oriole started away in mingled embarrassment and surprise.

"Why, Rufe, old fellow, how came you here?"

"His worship brought me. Hi! Master Mark, and I don't wonder you're in no hurry to get away. And I have been thinking that you might be kept agin your will."

The wizard came in behind him, smiling at the sailor's perplexity.

"Now be sure, honest Rufus, that you can trust your young master a little longer with us before you leave."

"What, was he afraid I was foully dealt with?—ah, I see. I am much obliged to you for your interest, Rufe, but you perceive I do not need much sympathy. My ankle is nearly well, besides."

"I brought a letter to you, perhaps you'll read it before I go. I shan't be alarmed any longer about you, Mister Mark."

"A very wise resolution; let me have the letter, then, I may wish to answer it."

Mark broke open the note, and read it with a darkening face.

"My DEAR MARK.—If it is possible for you to return without injury to yourself, I pray you come home at once. Your father's condition alarms me,

exceedingly. Sometimes I tremble for his mind. The Australian is still with us. He has suggested to your father a singular idea—that you are to marry Jessie. What do you say to it? If you cannot come, write at once to

"Your anxious and affectionate mother."

Mark folded up the letter, and glanced up into the wizard's face with a troubled eye.

"Don't you think I can be got safely to the boat? It is imperatively necessary that I go home at once. There is no telling what new mischief that old wretch will hatch up, and I see plainly my poor mother is sorely tried. She needs my help."

He handed the note for his inspection. The wizard read it through with grave attention.

"Perhaps you might go. We could carry you to the boat; the limb is certainly in an unusually favourable state, but what is your decision? Do you desire to consummate the marriage referred to?"

Mark's eye flashed.

"I would cut off my right hand sooner. I go to demand an explanation of my father why this meddling, evil-minded old man is allowed to hold sway at the Manor? If there is any claim he had, I desire to know and understand it. I want my uncle to be well, for if that old man must remain, I shall go out from the Manor. I am young and strong, there are a dozen ways I can earn my own livelihood, and the army and navy are always open. Do you think I will sell my manliness in that way? Do you think anything shall compel me to marry a woman I have always regarded as my sister, who could not possibly hold my heart's dearest affection? especially"—he added, reaching out with a tender smile for the little hand of Oriole, "especially since that heart has spoken for itself in unmistakable terms. I know not her true name nor yours, your history is a sealed book for me, all that relates to you is mysterious, and gives no hint for me to judge of your antecedents, and yet here and now, in Rufus White's presence, I declare that I respect, esteem, and love you both, and that the dearest hope I have is, that sometime you will give me permission to take to my home and heart, the dear little Oriole of this happy and peaceful, if secret Nest. If you can give me your confidence I shall be grateful; if you withhold it, I shall in no wise condemn you. Now I think you understand me, and can judge something of my motives for action in this matter."

The wizard was deeply affected. The broad chest heaved, the bright drops gathered in his eyes, and his voice was tremulous as he replied:

"Generous, trusting, noble youth! it is possible I have ever borne you angry thoughts? Your confidence in us shall not be tried for long. It was indeed through the merciful interposition of Providence that you were sent here. You have won from me the pride and affection of a father. You may count upon my aid in this matter, and believe me, it will prove more powerful than the wiles of that evil old man."

"And Oriole—what does she say? Will she some time fold these bright wings upon this faithful heart? Will she allow the wounded knight she saved to teach her love's sweet lesson, as these halcyon days have taught it unto him?" whispered Mark.

Oriole stood with her arms crossed, her beautiful eyes upon the floor.

Slowly, while Mark was speaking, the soft pink of her cheek deepened to scarlet, and overspread her whole face. Very shyly, and only for the briefest glance, she lifted her eyes to his.

"I think the lesson is perfect now, Mark. If you believe you can improve it, and my father say not nay, you shall be my master."

And she fled away to her little room to escape the smiling eyes around her, and Mark's exclamation of blissful gratitude.

"Now, then, for home! Oh, I have a brave heart to battle with them," said Mark, gaily. "How will you manage to get me to the boat? Could not crutches get me there by my own effort?"

"We will try a better fashion. There is a superfluous door somewhere—can't we take him upon it between us, Rufus?"

"Certainly, certainly, your honour," stammered Rufus, considerably perplexed, albeit somewhat relieved from his graver fears of the wizard by this little episode.

The master of the isle handed up the door, and in a trice Mark was laid upon it.

But Mark was looking wistfully at the door through which Oriole had vanished.

"Oriole, Oriole, dost thou not sing a good-night song?" called he.

The door unclosed, and the sweet face, lips quivering, eyes overflowing, cheeks aflame, hovered a moment in sight.

"Good night, dear Mark. Heaven keep you from evil!" faltered she, and hastily retreated again.

"Ho! now for the boat!" said Mark, cheerily.

"I go like a hero, on the shoulders of the brave."

(To be continued.)

GROWING TEA IN AMERICA.—A man who has been cultivating tea, as an experiment, since 1860, writes that most of his plants grow finely, that his tea is of good quality, and the plants will do quite as well in Georgia as in their native country. The plants require no culture after the third year. If well taken care of, by that time they will be large enough to commence the manufacture of tea from them. The yield to the acre is from three to four hundred pounds, and the plants produce good crops for eighteen or twenty years. The growth of tea is not affected by dry or wet weather or by storms, and insects will not molest the plants.

A DAUGHTER TO MARRY.

By the Author of "Butler Burke at Eton," &c.

CHAPTER XIII.

Some villain hath done me wrong.

Shakespeare.

Sexton.—What heard you him say else?
2nd Watchman.—Marry, that he hath received a thousand ducats of Don John.
Dobberly.—Flat burglary, as ever was committed.
Voyes.—By the mass, that it is.

AFTER listening for about ten minutes, Mrs. Posh sank into a chair and heaved a deep sigh and said: "I don't hear nothing now. Deary me, Mrs. Wall, if you only knew the ghostly sort of life I lead in this place you'd shed a tear and pity me. I'm not of the grumbling sort, as you know. I take things easy, although there's a deal to try one's temper in this world."

"And that there is," exclaimed Mrs. Wall, sympathizingly.

"It's a wonder how people lives," continued Mrs. Posh, "for things as they go on now are enough to drive one crazy. There's vitriol and sugar in the gin, there's pen-dust in the snuff, and chicory in the coffee. Well, my dear, let's make ourselves comfortable afore you feel called upon to go. I don't suppose there's anyone downstairs, because the dogs are bound to bark, so we'll put it down to my fancy, if you please, and don't make no objection."

"Let it be so, mum," replied Mrs. Wall. "I'm your guest and ready and willin' to do your bidding."

The two old women composed themselves, and the foul work downstairs went on uninterrupted. When Mr. Sandford Saville had arranged everything so as to denote and lead people to believe that a burglary from without had been committed, he paused, and sitting down upon a chair, rested awhile from his labours, so that he might compose and quiet himself. His nerves were in a frightful state of jar and tension. He felt all to pieces, as it were, and the perspiration, wrung from him more by the agony of his thoughts than by the severity of the work he had done, ran from his face in a stream.

The man was not a criminal of his own accord. He was not naturally evil and bad at heart. He was simply weak. His nature was not sufficiently powerful to resist the continual assaults of his wife, who was perpetually urging him to enrich her by any means, no matter how dishonest or how perilous.

Unhappily for himself, he had, in a moment of semi-imbecility, given way to her promptings, and consented to rob the bank of which he was the trusted manager.

The character of a desperate and original criminal is not utterly contemptible, but Mr. Sandford Saville could neither boast of originality or bravery; he was but the passive tool in the hands of an unscrupulous and wicked woman, who had set up for herself a goal which she determined to reach, cost what it might. She was a sort of human car of Juggernaut, rolling on, on, ever on, regardless of the groans of the dying and the shrieks of the wounded.

But one thing remained to be done before Mr. Sandford Saville took his departure, with at least fifty thousand pounds in his pocket. Most of the money he had appropriated was in notes—a consignment of which had late that afternoon arrived at the bank, and which had not been entered in the books by his own express order, consequently the numbers were not known, and he would have little or no difficulty in passing them and turning the paper into ready money.

The one thing remaining to be accomplished was the slaughter of the dogs. This was easily effected, for he had provided himself with some poisoned meat. It is difficult to say why Mr. Sandford Saville had not disposed of the dumb animals long ago. Perhaps his soft, weak heart had a corner in which lurked a little pity.

He was fond of dogs, and two of those he was about to kill were magnificent creatures, and worth a large sum of money. But it was necessary that he should be their executioner, and he did not shrink from the inevitable task which devolved upon him.

He could not have recourse to half-and-half mea-

sures. They would destroy him; and, after all, what was the death of a couple of dogs?—nothing—a mere bagatelle, which he could afford to laugh at when he compared it with what he was doing. Robbing the widow and orphan, the hardworker and the daily-toiler, who had been laying up something for his old age, was the crime of which Sandford Saville was guilty, and he knew it.

He had the stolen money safely secured about him, and he knew that he must not let his coward heart fail him.

First of all, he threw a piece of arsenicated meat to each of the mastiffs.

When the noble beasts had rolled on to their sides in the agonies of a painful and excruciating death, he turned his attention to the terror which had met him on his entrance to the house, and he treated the poor creature as he had treated the mastiffs. In a quarter of an hour all three dogs were dead, and he felt himself at liberty to depart.

He buttoned up his coat and arranged his attire, and stole softly over the boards till he came to the door, which he opened carefully, letting himself out with the utmost caution.

The court was, as he had expected to find it, deserted. The sound of a policeman's footstep could be heard in Old Broad Street, but it was far distant, and appeared to be going in the direction of Bishopsgate Street, so that he rightly concluded he had no danger to apprehend from him.

Once in the court, Mr. Saville began to breathe again. Oh! how hot and stifling the atmosphere of the banking-house had seemed to him. How often had he started nervously as a little mouse ran along the wainscoting, thinking the officers of justice were upon his track, and had come to arrest him in the very midst of his nefarious work.

How his heart beat when the idle wind howled dismally beneath the eaves, as if singing the death-wail of some one dear to it. How like his own funeral knell it struck upon his ears and assailed his terrified senses.

He would not trust himself inside a cab; he was afraid of that mode of locomotion, because it was easy to have a cab to any particular house. So he walked with a restless eagerness that showed how perturbed his mind was. When he reached Berkeley Square it was close upon midnight, and letting himself in with a key, he went straight to his wife's boudoir, and found Mrs. Saville awaiting him.

"Your presence here," she said, "admonishes me that you have been successful so far. How much have you carried off?"

In reply, he unpadded himself, as it were, emptying his pockets and throwing the contents upon the table. Mrs. Saville regarded the crisp notes with the affection of a miser who loved them for their own sake, though in reality she only cared about money as a means to an end, regarding it as the wherewithal to purchase property, and looking upon golden sovereigns as stepping-stones to greatness.

Then she made him sit by her side, and bade him give her a history of the night's work, of which she did not permit him leaving out the minutest circumstance.

When her curiosity was satisfied, she complimented him, and spoke brave words to reassure him, and help the poor trembling fellow to keep up his spirits.

"I shall begin to admire you, Sandford," she said, "if you go on as well as you have commenced. You have had an hour or two's work, and we are fifty thousand pounds richer. Is it not better to make a bold stroke, to make a coup now and then, than to go on slaving all one's life for a miserable competency, which does one no good when one has it, barely sufficing to keep one in the necessities of life, and affording none of its luxuries?"

"Better a dinner of herbs, and contentment therewith," said Mr. Sandford Saville, with a sigh; "at least, I don't say so on my own authority. I am only quoting the words of a great man, who was called wise both by his contemporaries and by posterity."

"That's nonsense," said Mrs. Saville. "That sort of thing is all very well for charity schools, but for people like you and I, it is preposterously absurd. I like the luxuries of life; without them I should not care to live. Be a man, Sandford, if you don't want me to despise you."

Mr. Saville tried to look happy, but he failed lamentably. His wife had provided a supper for him, but he was totally unable to touch so much as an oyster; he drank copiously, however, and shortly afterwards retired to rest—to rest, but not to sleep.

He would—wretched man—have given worlds for the power of closing his eyelids in a sweet, refreshing slumber, but it was not till near morning, when the grey dawn was streaming through the shutter-chinks, that exhausted nature asserted its prerogative, and he fell into an uneasy sleep, from which he was perpetually starting, and crying out in a terrified manner

At about half-past ten on that eventful night an important part in this history was being enacted by the proprietor of a small semi-detached villa at Highgate. In Hawk House lived Mr. Francis Barclay, who was a clerk in the Royal Bubble Bank. He was a young man, and married. He had two children, and he found it necessary to work very hard in order to make both ends meet. However, being a man of industrious habits, he contrived to do so.

His salary in the bank was a hundred and fifty pounds per annum, but, being a clever shorthand writer, he augmented his slender income.

Every one engaged in the City dines, and an hour is usually allowed for that salutary process.

If an imperial edict were passed, forbidding Englishmen to dine, there would infallibly be a revolution.

Mr. Francis Barclay was, however, an exception to this very general rule—he did not dine in the middle of the day, he only lunched, contenting himself with a *tea à la fourchette*, when he returned to the bosom of his family in the evening.

He was, nevertheless, absent from the bank during the full hour allowed for abdominal recreation. What did he do during the interval? He made money.

He reported the proceedings of certain companies; the meetings of companies generally taking place at one o'clock, so that every one may have an opportunity of attending.

There is generally one public meeting at least in the City every day, and the newspapers with which Mr. Barclay was connected paid him a small sum for daily and correctly reporting the proceedings.

It was his custom to take his notes home with him and translate them into decent and intelligible English after his tea dinner. He was an admirer of economy, and liked tea-dinners because the cheering and not inebriating beverage satisfied his thirst and saved the expense of beer.

On the evening of the robbery at the bank he had attended a meeting in the middle of the day, and afterwards a public dinner at the Albion Tavern in Aldergate Street, the speeches at which were not brought to a conclusion until a late hour. When Francis Barclay was released from the reporters' table, he recollected that he had left his great coat hanging up in the bank. He would have had no objection to its remaining there until the next day, had not his notes of the public meeting, the proceedings of which he had reported in the middle of the day, reposed in the great coat pocket.

He could not go home until he had translated his notes, and left them at the different newspaper offices, so he walked quickly past the General Post Office in St. Martin's Lane, and along Chispeade, until he reached Broad Street.

Like Mr. Sandford Saville, he went to the door in the court, and rang the bell. In a short time his summons was responded to by Mrs. Posh, who was still engaged with her friend Mrs. Wall.

It was then about half-past eleven, and Mr. Saville could not have left the premises ten minutes. It was fortunate for him that the speeches at the Albion had lasted so long as they had.

"Who is it?" said Mrs. Posh, shading the candle with her hand to prevent its being extinguished by the wind.

"Me, Mr. Barclay."

"Oh! it's you, Mr. Barclay," said Mrs. Posh; "come in, sir, and what can I do for you?"

"Why, I am sorry to disturb you at this late hour of the night, but I have left my great coat, with all my papers in the pocket. I have been at a meeting all the evening reporting, and I want the notes, as I must put them in English before I go home, because the newspapers will expect them; and now I think of it, Mrs. Posh, I will sit down in the counting-house and transcribe the shorthand there. I shall not be half an hour."

"Very well, sir. You can do as you please," replied Mrs. Posh. "I wonder where the dogs are? Asleep I suppose. It's odd, too, they generally make a rare noise when anybody comes, and I haven't heard them all the evening. Oh, yes, sir, you can stop as long as you like. I've got a friend upstairs, and she won't be going just yet. When you've done your work, sir, pray you will kindly give me a call, and I'll come down and let you out, and see that the doors are properly shut and locked on the inside."

"I'll do that, Mrs. Posh. If you lend me your candle do you think you can find your way upstairs in the dark?"

"I ought to, sir, seeing the many times I've been up and down stairs," replied Mrs. Posh, with a little old-fashioned laugh peculiarly her own.

Francis Barclay took the light from Mrs. Posh, and walked into the counting-house, which was at the front of the building. This again was fortunate for Sandford Saville, and unfortunate for the young man, who was unwittingly piling up a mountain of circumstantial evidence which he would find it difficult, if not impossible, to refute.

He found his great coat hanging upon a peg behind his desk, took from its pocket the shorthand notes of the meeting in the middle of the day, and sitting down, worked diligently for some time, summarising the proceedings of both meetings and making a very readable report for the perusal of the next morning's papers. It took him some time to do all this, for he had two reports to make; he wrote on a peculiar sort of paper which carried the impression of the pen, through the medium of some coloured material, to another sheet beneath, which saved him some little labour.

Having finished his task, he got up, only too glad to have finished his task. He stood at the foot of the stairs and called for Mrs. Posh, who at once hobbled down the staircase.

"I am much obliged to you for letting me in," said Francis Barclay. "I had no right to expect so much indulgence at this time of night. I am very much obliged to you."

"If you want to do anything for me, sir," said Mrs. Posh, "perhaps you will kindly speak to Mr. Sandford Saville."

"The manager?"

"Yes, sir. He has promised me an increase of salary this ever so long."

"I will speak to him with pleasure, Mrs. Posh," said Francis Barclay; "but you must not blame me if my application is not successful. I am only a clerk myself, you must recollect, and should be glad of some one to speak for me. But here is a practical earnest of my goodwill."

"Sixpence! Thank you, sir. I'm sure I'm very grateful, and feel as such."

Mrs. Posh pocketed the money, curtsied the young clerk out of the house, and then went upstairs to finish her carouse with Mrs. Wall, for the entertainment began to partake of that nature.

Mrs. Wall stayed till half-past one, and then she went away with tottering footsteps and sought her own abode.

Francis Barclay walked back to Highbury. There were no omnibuses at that late hour, and he could not afford to take a cab.

He called on his way at the various newspaper offices to which he was under an obligation to deliver copy, and as most of them had their local habitation in or about Fleet Street, he walked up Chancery Lane and made his way home through the many winding and tortuous streets which lay between Bloomsbury Square and Camden Town.

A conversation took place between himself and his wife which was thought of some value afterwards by certain lawyers, though it could not be given in evidence, as a wife, according to legal rules, cannot give evidence against her husband.

"How late you are!" exclaimed Mrs. Barclay.

"My dear Maria," replied her husband, "I assure you I have been busy the whole time. I did not leave the bank till six, and I had a dinner to attend at the Albion, at which I was kept until nearly eleven, or I think past that hour; then I had to go to the bank to get my great coat, in which I had left my notes of a meeting I attended in the middle of the day, and while I was there I transcribed my notes. Mrs. Posh, the housekeeper, made no objection, and went upstairs to talk to a friend, leaving me alone for more than half an hour."

"Indeed," said his wife; "well, all I know is, Francis, I wish you would do less work and be more with me. It is a perfect misery to be alone so much as I am. Here have I been all day, all the evening, and I may say part of the night, without so much as seeing you. It may be all very well for you, Francis, to go about to public dinners, but I have no one but the nurse to talk to."

"My dear," replied Mr. Barclay, "you know very well that I would rather be at home with you."

"I know nothing of the sort."

"Well, look here; is it likely that I should be so enamoured of work as to go about all day long and all the evening, too, when I have a pretty wife at home, and one whom I love very dearly. I work because my income is so miserably small. I want to give you all those little luxuries to which you were accustomed when you were at home. If I did not love you, I should not work. It is not for myself I do it."

"Pray, don't do it for me. I would rather have you at home; and if you go out like this, night after night, and keep me up until two or three o'clock in the morning, I shall go out also. I am not with resources and invitations, I can tell you!"

"I don't know what you mean by 'resources,'" said Mr. Barclay. "I can only say that if you wish to go out and amuse yourself at some friend's house, I shall be only too happy for you to do so."

"You say so now, but when the time comes you will speak very differently. I should not care so much," added the injured wife, "if you had sent me a London District Telegram, saying that you were not coming home till such and such a time; but you are

so thoroughly selfish as to have lost all regard for me."

"I beg your pardon," said Francis Barclay. "I am not selfish; and when you are cooler and in a better temper to-morrow, you will admit the truth of what I say."

There was a pause, after which Mrs. Barclay went up to her husband, and throwing her arms round his neck, said:

"Forgive me, dear Frank; you do work very hard, and it is so wrong of me to scold you; but I am alone fretting for so many hours, and I can't help being naughty. Do forgive me dear, dear Frank, and I will try to be better in future."

Mr. Barclay freely forgave his wife the fleeting and pardonable petulance she had displayed, and gave her a kiss which restored them to their ordinary standard of conjugal felicity.

The next morning Francis Barclay rose rather later than usual. It was half-past eight before he got up, and he was due at the bank at ten. He began breakfast at nine, and got through that uninteresting meal as hurriedly as possible.

He had the mortification of seeing his own particular bag rolling along the highway at a considerable distance, and although he shouted until he felt hoarse, the obtuse conductor, who was probably "full inside," would not recognize him.

It was nearly half-past ten when he arrived at the bank, and he was surprised to see a small crowd round the entrance. As he entered, and pushed the swing doors on one side, he was still more surprised to remark that two men of rather seamy appearance, but gifted with lawyer-like physiognomies, fixed their regards upon him in an unpleasant manner.

Those gentlemen were Messrs. Barr and Bannister, the famous detectives of the city police force.

When the young men attached to the bank arrived in the course of the morning they discovered that a burglary had been committed, that the safe had been forced open, and that the dogs were dead.

Their alarm was great; and when Mr. Sandford Saville arrived, at ten o'clock, his appearance, as manager of the bank, was hailed with great satisfaction. The clerks were sitting in their places, doing the small amount of work which was necessary at that early hour. Some, however, were standing in little knots and discussing the great question of the moment. It was clear and undeniable that the safe had been broken open, and that a large amount of treasure had been stolen therefrom. Mrs. Posh was interrogated, and she immediately fell on her knees and burst into tears.

"Oh, Mr. Saville! Oh, sir!" she cried, as soon as the manager arrived. "It's awful for me to be accused of this 'ere burglary, which I never so much as dreamt of. It's all along of my good nature; and Mrs. Wall, she told me so, which I was foolish not to take notice of."

"Come, come, my good woman, you must know something about it!" exclaimed Mr. Saville, who was very pale and agitated. "You were in the house, and a robbery of this magnitude could not have been committed without your connivance."

"Oh, sir! Don't, sir! say that, sir!" said Mrs. Posh, in an agony of apprehension. "It was Mr. Barclay, if it was any one."

"Eh! whom do you say?"

"Mr. Barclay, sir."

"What do you mean by that?"

"He came here last night, sir, at eleven o'clock," said Mrs. Posh, still on her knees, and holding her hands clasped.

"Come here, to the bank, do you mean?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did he come for?"

Oh, the look of joy and exultation which took possession of Mr. Sandford Saville's face! His worn look gave place to a ghdsome one, and he was a different man in an instant. It was strange that the metamorphosis should be so instantaneous, but when he saw that it was probable that another would be accused, a heavy load was lifted off his shoulders, and he could afford to breathe once more.

"He said he came for some shorthand notes he left in his coat pocket."

"Did you see his coat hanging up?"

"No, sir, I did not."

"How long was he here?"

"A good half-hour, sir."

"Were you with him?"

"No, sir. This is how it was: he said he would go into the counting-house and put his shorthand notes into English, and I made no objection, thinking him a gentleman, and one as meant no harm. Well, sir, I happened to have a friend of mine upstairs, by name Mrs. Wall, thinking as I wouldn't leave her to herself, I went upstairs, and—"

"Do I understand you, Mrs. Posh," said the bank manager, "that Mr. Barclay was alone during the half-hour you were upstairs with your friend?"

"Quite alone, sir."

"And had every opportunity of doing just as he liked?"

"He had, sir."

Another gleam of sunshine beamed from Mr. Saville's face, but he turned to the crowd of people around him, saying:

"We must not judge this young man hastily. Circumstances are certainly against him, but circumstantial evidence is at all times hazardous and untrustworthy. He may be guilty, and on the other hand, as I said before, he may be innocent. It is not for us to judge him."

"If you please, sir," exclaimed Mr. Morley, the head cashier, "the clerk I sent to the police station has returned with detectives Barr and Bannister."

"Oh! very well. Let them come in. I will place them in possession of the whole of the evidence."

Barr was a talkative man, and he did the elocutionary part of the business. Bannister was the stink bound, and raked up evidence, and hunted people down, and stuck to a clue like a leech. They always worked in couples. They could not get on without one another. In his own particular way, each was clever.

Barr approached Mr. Saville, and exclaimed:

"I hear there's been a bit of a crack here, sir?"

"Yes, there has, I am sorry to say, and property to the amount of—"

He was about to betray himself, and say fifty thousand pounds, when he checked himself most opportunely, and added:

"How much did you say, Mr. Morley?"

"Well, sir, as well as we can judge at present, close upon half a hundred in notes has vanished—that is to say, half a hundred thousand."

"It is a large sum sir, a very large sum," replied Barr.

Then Mr. Sandford Saville and Mr. Morley enlightened the detectives, and told them everything which had as yet come to their knowledge, and Messrs. Barr and Bannister listened with the greatest attention, making no remark but drinking all in.

By way of conclusion, Mr. Sandford Saville said, "I think you will be fully justified in taking Mr. Francis Barclay into custody; but bear in mind, that if a question of bail arises, I shall be most happy to put it in for him to any extent, so great is the respect I have for him and his family."

"Very well, sir," replied Barr, "I'll keep my eye upon the young gentleman. I shouldn't like to arrest him all at once. It would please me, if you've no objection, to keep my eye upon him for a certain time, and watch his movements."

"Very well, I have no wish whatever," replied Mr. Saville, "to interfere with the police in the execution of their duty. Exercise your own discretion."

So Messrs. Bannister and Barr posted themselves at the entrance of the bank, and having had Mr. Barclay described to them, experienced no difficulty in finding out the supposed culprit as he entered the Royal Bubble Bank from Old Broad Street.

Francis Barclay, preserving the most comical poise, walked through his fellow clerks to his accustomed place, without taking any notice of the birds of ill omen, and whistled blithely as he went for want of thought.

Mr. Sandford Saville, on the other hand, sat down in a nervous and expectant manner, awaiting the issue with impatience.

(To be continued.)

The settlement voted by Parliament to the late King of the Belgians, then Prince Leopold, of £50,000 per annum, in the event of his surviving his first wife, the Princess Charlotte, his majesty did not draw in full after he became King of the Belgians in 1831, but always drew from the Treasury some £12,000 a year, which went in part to pay certain annuities to servants and bequests to charities, which the princess directed should be paid, and also to keep up Claremont, where his majesty resided with the princess after their marriage. The reason why the claim to the £50,000 annuity was never waived was in case his majesty should have had at any time to vacate the throne of Belgium.

BRIDESMAIDS.—Next to a bride herself, every young lady likes to be a bridesmaid. Wedlock is thought to be contagious, and, much to their credit, fair spinners are not at all afraid of catching it. So far as official conduct is concerned, when you have seen one bridesmaid, you have seen the whole fascinating tribe. Their leading duty seems to be to treat the bride as "a victim led with garlands to the sacrifice." They consider it necessary to exhort her to "cheer up." Her fair assistants provide themselves with pungent essences, lest she should faint at the "trying moment," which, between you and me, she has no more idea of doing than of dying. It is true she sometimes says that she "feels as if she would sink into the earth," and they respond, "Poor dear!" and apply the

smelling-bottle; but she, nevertheless, goes through her nuptial martyrdom with great fortitude. In nine cases out of ten the bridegroom is more "flustered" than the fragile and lovely creature at his side; but nobody thinks of pitying him, poor fellow! If one of the groomsman does recommend him to take a glass of wine before the ceremony to steady his nerves, the advice is given superciliously, as who would say—"What a spoony you are, old fellow!" Bridesmaids may be considered as brides, in what lawyers call the "incubate" or incipient state. They are looking forward to that day of triumphant weakness when it shall be their turn to be "poor dear creatured," and otherwise sustained and supported, as the law of nuptial pretences directs. Let us hope they may not be disappointed.

BRITOMARTE, THE MAN-HATER.

By E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "Self-Made," "All Alone," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Oh, who can tell the unspeakable misery
Of solitude like this?
No sound can ever reach my ear
Save of the passing wind,
The ocean's ebb and flow,
The forest in the gale,
The patter of the shower;
Sounds—dead and mournful all!

Southey.

When Britomarte awoke from that deadly state of insensibility into which the tremendous mental and physical shock had cast her, her recovery seemed like coming back to life in the grave.

At first she did not know what sort of creature she was, or what state of existence she had come into. Neither memory nor thought was present with her. There was only a bodily sense of uneasiness, as the air again inflated her collapsed lungs, and the vital current resumed its flow through her damp, chilled, and heavy limbs; and a moral sense of vague despair, impossible to analyse.

Instinctively she turned over, and tried to rise; faintly she perceived that the palms of her hands were deep in the moist sand, and that they went deeper as she bore her weight upon them in her efforts to get up. And thus she discovered that she was on the ground.

At length, after several fruitless attempts, she succeeded in lifting herself to a sitting position. And then she looked blindly around; but nothing was to be seen. All was dark as pitch. And nothing was to be heard except the thunder of the sea upon the coast—a sound that impressed her senses like some dimly remembered knell of doom.

She put her hands up to her head, and tried to struggle forth from this state of mental dullness and confusion.

She tried to think and remember who she was, what had happened, and how she came to this Hades of darkness and desolation.

In vain! as well might a new-born infant try to recall the events of its pre-existence, supposing it ever to have had one. With all her striving to come forth from chaos, she could only arrive at a dim mysterious consciousness of infinite loss and eternal despair. Was she a disembodied spirit, then?

No! such spirits had not flesh and blood, as she felt too sensibly that she had.

What then?

The ceaseless beating of the waves upon the shore was a familiar and suggestive sound, and troubled her with glimpses of memory that flitted in and out of her mind like ghosts in a graveyard.

It was a trifle that at last struck the electric chain of association, and restored her to herself. In her blind movements, she touched the inflated life-preserver that was fastened around her waist. And instantly, with a shock of returning life, the whole scene of the catastrophe flashed upon her memory; and she knew that she was cast away upon that dreary coast on which the life-boat had been struggling all day long, and far into the night, and on which it had finally been wrecked.

But whether this coast was a part of the main land or of an island, whether it was barren or clothed with vegetation, whether it was uninhabited or peopled with cannibals, she did not know and she did not care; or what deadly perils and cruel sufferings from the ruthless savages, or from protracted starvation might await her there, she did not know and she did not care.

Instantly, with the flash of memory, had come the knowledge of her one great sorrow, the loss of her lover and her beloved.

Yes, in this awful hour of doom, Britomarte knew that she loved Justin with an earnestness that outweighed her hatred of his whole sex, and her devotion to the sacred rights of her own.

And the cry of her broken heart arose wildly on the dark night air, amid the profound stillness of that strange land—a cry of bitter anguish, not for the fate of her late companions, too probably perished in the sea; not for the feeling of her own horrible state of danger and desolation worse than death—but for despair at the loss of him whom she loved as only such souls as hers have power to love.

"Gone! gone! gone! Gone out of way for ever! Oh, this is the sorrow I dreaded worse than all others in this dark world! The only sorrow I ever really dreaded! Life without him! And now he is gone for ever, without one good word from me to let him know how I loved him. Ah! heaven, how I loved him!" She wrung her hands and tore her beautiful hair, and then flung her arms on high, and cried out again in the frenzy of longing:

"Justin! Justin! My lover! my beloved! Where are you? Where are you in all space? Are you near me? Can you hear me? Oh, is there no way of piercing the veil? of getting to you, or drawing you to me? Oh, come to me! Oh, hear me! I am telling you what no power could have ever drawn from my lips, Justin, while you were in the flesh. Justin, I am telling you how I loved you! how I love you! I meant to have died with you on the wreck! I did, Justin! I did, though I would not confess I loved you! I meant to have died with you. Oh, why did you not let me? I cannot, cannot outlive you! Once you said, though you loved me so much, you could live without me, because you were so strong to suffer. But I! oh, now I know that I am not strong—I cannot live without you, and with the memory of my bitter unkindness to you! Justin, Justin! Oh, spirit, wherever you live in boundless space, speak to my spirit!"

She was indeed almost insane in her phrensy of grief, remorse, and despair. And but for her deep religious principles, in her fierce anguish she would have run down through the darkness and cast herself headlong into the sea, that she still heard thundering upon the beach.

At last, exhausted by mental and physical trials, she sank down upon the ground and covered her face with her hands and sat there in mute despair during the remaining dark hours of the night.

Day dawned in that strange place at last.

She lifted up her bowed head and looked around, feeling in the midst of all her misery the same sort of weird curiosity that causes a criminal on his way to the scaffold to look with attention at every object of interest in the range of his vision.

She saw the eastern horizon growing red behind a grove of tall, dark trees. But what sort of trees they were she could not tell. She arose to her feet and stretched her chilled and benumbed limbs and took off her life-preserver.

Her clothing had dried upon her; but it had a strange harsh feeling and a strong scent of the sea water. Her hair, too, was loose and flowing; combs and pins had been lost in her recent battle with the waves. But she cared little for all these circumstances. A feverish thirst consumed her, and she walked on in search of some spring or stream of fresh water.

Day broadened over that unknown land, showing her an undulating and variegated country of hill and valley, plain and forest. The ground was covered with a coarse, rank verdure, and starred with many strange wild flowers. She merely glanced at these as she rambled inland in quest of a fountain to quench her burning thirst.

She walked some distance, fearless and careless of what unknown wild beasts or wilder men might intercept her progress and destroy her life. She often sank exhausted on the ground; and arose and recommenced her journey, driven onward by the fiery thirst that seemed to scorch up her very life-blood.

She came to that grove of tall dark trees behind which she had seen the sun rise in the morning. She found them to be a grove of cocoa-palms, and as she entered under their umbrella-like shades she was startled by a clattering over her head; and at the same time a missile was launched at her, that missed its mark and rolled at her feet.

She stooped and picked it up. It was a cocoa-nut. Raising her eyes at the same time, she saw a monkey perched in the tree above her, grinning and chattering with mischievous delight, and preparing to launch another nut at her.

So she hurried from under that tree and out of the way as fast as she could. She carried off the monkey's gift with her, thinking that if she could not find fresh water, she would try to break the nut and drink the sweet milk.

She passed through the grove of cocoa-palms and came out upon a gently declining plain that descended to the sea side; so she knew that she must have crossed the narrow point of land and come out at the part opposite to that upon which she had been first thrown.

The upper part of this plain was covered with a

thick growth of what seemed to be a coarse reed or bamboo, or what might be a species of sugar-cane. Britomarte had never seen the sugar-cane growing, and so she could not judge of it.

She broke off one of the straight stems and placed it to her lips and found it to contain a sweet juice, which she sucked with avidity to moisten her dried lips. But this only seemed to increase her thirst; and as yet she had found no fresh water, nor could she hope to find any so near the sea shore; but with a fragment of rock she contrived to break the cocoa-nut and drink the milk.

Still that did not quench her thirst; so she once more turned her steps from the sea and walked inland, though by another route than that by which she had come.

She entered another thicket of unfamiliar trees, which were not, however, cocoa-palms, but some unknown growth of that country. It was a picturesque thicket, with rocks and grottoes, clothed with luxuriant vegetation that grew in the crevices or wherever there was a root-hold of soil.

Suddenly she heard a welcome sound, the gurgling of some spring or stream of water. Following the sound, she came to a rock, from a fissure in which trickled a small, clear fountain.

She hastily made a scoop of her hand, and caught and quaffed the precious liquid eagerly. And when she had quenched her feverish thirst, she bathed her face and hands, and dried them with her handkerchief, which she found safe in her pocket.

While she was so employed she heard a sudden rush and whirr of wings, and looking up, she saw that a large flock of strange birds, of beautiful plumage, had made a descent and settled among the branches of the trees over her head.

She watched them for a little while, and then passed out of the thicket, up upon a sort of table land that occupied the centre between the two shores of this long peninsula, as she supposed it to be. She walked on, she knew not, cared not whither. Her burning thirst abated, and that physical suffering allayed, she again experienced heavy mental trouble.

She walked on in a purposeless way, until, happening to glance downwards, she saw before her a strange looking little animal, in size and shape not unlike our young native pig. But on being observed it started and scampered away.

She went on and crossed the elevated plain and came to another thicket, and passed through it and came out upon the sea coast again. And then she sat down in the collapse of despair.

"It is only to wander here until I shall be massacred by the savage natives or devoured by scarcely more savage beasts of prey, or else until I drag out a miserable remnant of existence, and perish slowly of famine and exposure, or sorrow and despair—more terrible than physical suffering. How long will my strength hold out to live and suffer? Not long, I hope and pray, since it would be to no perceptible good end. Ah, well, it cannot last for ever. 'Time and the hours wear out the weariest day!' This is a dreary season, but this also will pass away. Time is but a small portion of eternity. Let me think of that, and be strong."

While thus she reasoned herself out of her despondency, and nerved herself to endure the horror and desolation of her condition—a horror and desolation not even to be imagined by anyone who has only known misery in the midst of their own kind, in the reach of human sympathy—she suddenly heard a cry—a sharp, wild, piercing cry, between a howl and a shriek and a wail—a cry of anguish, and defiance, and ferocity.

She started and listened.

It was repeated again, wilder, higher, fiercer than before.

It was reiterated in almost human tones.

How intently she bent her head and listened.

"Ow-oo! ow-oo! ow-oo!" it screamed.

Human tones yet not articulate sounds.

"Och-hone! och-hone! och-hone!" it hallooed.

A sudden light dawned on Britomarte's mind. She knew that these last sounds were never heard off the "Gim iv the say," except from some "exile of Erin." She immediately arose, and hurried down the beach in the direction from which the cries proceeded.

And there upon the sands, dangerously near to the water's edge, lay the form of Judith Riordan. The life-preserver was still around her waist, but she lay flat upon her back, with her feet and hands raised, kicking and fighting the air, and her voice lifted and howling dementally.

And with good reason, for she seemed unable to get up and run away from the spot, and the tide was coming in rapidly, and with every advancing wave threatening to overwhelm and drown her.

Miss Conyers hurried to her side, and knelt down, exclaiming, eagerly:

"Oh, Judith! Judith Riordan! thank heaven that you are saved."

"Yes, thanks to him, and small thanks to any of you, leaving me here to be drowned entirely. And where are the laves of yez, at all, at all?" demanded the Irishwoman, crossly.

"The rest of us? Oh, Judith, I don't know. You are the first one that I have seen. Oh, Judith, I fear—I greatly fear—that all the others have—"

A huge wave came rolling and roaring onward, breaking at their feet, and showering them with spray. "Ah, had luck till ye thin, why don't you drag me out of this, itself? Sure the next one will carry me off entirely," screamed Judith.

"Oh, Judith, poor girl, can't you help yourself at all? Are you so badly hurt as all that?" inquired Miss Conyers, as she took hold of the woman's shoulders, and putting all her strength in the effort, slowly and laboriously dragged her a few feet from the water's edge and let her down a moment, while she (Britomarte) stopped to breathe and recover.

"Am I hurt so bad as that, ye ask me? Yez better believe that same. Sure, and I'm thinking every bone in me body is broke, so I do. Ah, bedad, here comes another ay! Sure, if I'd been left where I was, it would have took me off entirely. Och! drag me further out of this—"

Even while she spoke, the advancing wave broke, and tumbled down, a shattered avalanche of water, at their feet, covering them with a shower of spray.

When it had fallen back, Britomarte once more took hold of her companion, and with painful efforts succeeded in dragging her still a few feet farther on, where she was safe from the tide.

"And now let me see where you are hurt, Judith," said Miss Conyers, first taking off the life-preserver from the woman's waist, and then unfastening the clothes to proceed with the examination.

"Judith," said the young lady, after a very careful investigation, "I cannot perceive that there is any bone broken, or any joint dislocated, in your whole body. Still, there may be some inward injuries. Where do you feel pain?"

"Sure, all over me."

"Well, that is more hopeful than if you felt acute pain in any particular spot."

"Sure, it's ivry joint is out iv joint, and ivry bone broke!"

"I really think, Judith, that you are a great deal more frightened than hurt. How long had you been lying here when I found you?"

"Divil a bit do I know! Last thing I rimember, whin the boat went down, I was fighting with the say, and a great wave rised me up as high as the sky and hev me down there; whin I thought sure the world had come to an ind; for whin I struck the beach itself, I saw the hivvins was all on fire, and thin all was darkness and nothing. And sure I knowed no more till the say waked me up this morning, dashing spray intil me face! And I found meself here, and not able to move, and the tide coming in to throw me!"

"You kicked vigorously, Judith. Believe me, you are whole and sound, skin and bone. I can well believe that you have been severely shocked by the concussion, and that you feel very sore from lying there all night; and I suppose the life-preserver impeded the freedom of your motions. But now I have taken it off, and loosened your clothes; let me try to lift you to a sitting position; and after a little while, perhaps, you will find that you can walk."

"Ow-oo! Ow-oo! Och hone! Och hone! It's for me sine! It's for me sine!" howled the woman, as Miss Conyers tenderly and patiently lifted her up. Doubtless the poor creature was bruised and shaken, and found motion rather painful, however necessary; but then she had not the least patience in suffering, and she howled terrifically.

"And sure," she complained, as she sat and rubbed her limbs, "ye've all had your tay this morning, and I havn't had the laste taste iv breakfast!"

"We have all had our tea," repeated Miss Conyers, sorrowfully, struck to the heart by the contrast presented in the sweet home thought of the peaceful morning meal, and the utter deprivation of all hope and comfort in this strange and dreary place. "Oh! Judith, do you not know where we are?"

"Sure, and I know well enough itself. We're on shore, so we are, and I want me say," said the Irishwoman, petulantly; for she seemed to have forgotten that all the provisions were lost.

"Oh, Judith, we are on shore; you and myself are on shore; but where our companions are, heaven only knows!"

"Och hone! och hone! Is it true? Is it true?"

"It is true that I have seen here no sign of any survivor of our ship's company, though they may possibly have been saved elsewhere."

"Oh, my father! oh, my father! Ah, thin, are ye swallowed up in the salt say? Ow-oo! ow-oo! Och hone! och hone! that ever I should live to see the black day!" howled the woman, awaying back and forth.

And she kept up these loud lamentations for so long

a time, that at length Miss Conyers, who was sitting patiently by her side, stooped and whispered:

"Judith, it is sometimes a consolation to the survivors of a calamity to know that their departed friends have escaped by death the more terrible misfortunes to which they (the survivors) are still exposed. It has been a comfort to me, and it may be to you, to think that our friends are saved from being devoured by wild beasts, or tortured by savages, or slowly starved to death on this desolate shore, as we are likely to be."

"Ah, had luck till ye! It's a Job's comforterye are itself, entirely. Will it bring me father back to have the bastes make a male of meself, sure? Ow-oo! Ow-oo! Ow-oo!" And the lamentation recommenced louder than before.

Britomarte sat patiently beside Judith, listening wearily to her howlings, until at last, they were answered by howlings of another sort.

Miss Conyers looked up, and Judith dropped her apron and stared.

Before them stood a large hyena, with his head thrown back, his mouth wide open, and his teeth gleaming, as he laughed the horrible laugh of his kind.

Judith, forgetting alike her sorrows and her infirmities, started up to run.

But the hyena, apparently as much afraid of the unknown creature who had jumped up as she was of him, started and scampered off as fast as he could go.

And Miss Conyers gave her arm to her frightened companion, to help her to a place of greater safety.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Nor, cruel as it seemed, could he
Their haste, himself, condemn,
Aware that fight, in such a sea,
Alone could rescue them;
Yet bitter felt it still to die,
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

Gelamuth.

AND now let us see what in the meantime had become of Justin, left with his few unfortunate companions to perish on the deserted wreck.

After he had forcibly torn Britomarte from her clinging hold upon his bosom, and dropped her into the outstretched arms of Mike Mullony, and had heard her last despairing cry and had waved his hand for the life-boat to be pushed off—he abruptly turned away that he might not have his resolution shaken by the imploring words and gestures of her whom he loved more than life; for he did not know that with the cry still upon her lips she had swooned away in the arms that had received her.

He climbed with difficulty up the inclined plane of the half submerged quarter-deck to the stern, which was lifted out of the water and wedged tightly in a cleft of the rock at an angle of about forty-five degrees, more or less.

Then he turned and stood nearly waist deep in water, holding on to the shrouds of the mizzen-mast to keep from being carried off by the waves.

The sea that continued to break over the wreck with tremendous shocks, did not, however, rise far above the foot of the mizzen-mast; though every wave that thundered over the quaking deck shook the wreck to its keel and nearly swept the man from his holdings.

Yet there he stood, intently watching the receding life-boat, and silently praying for her safety, as she laboured through the heavy sea.

And even when she was lost to sight, in the deep fog that enveloped the distant, unknown shore, he continued to gaze after her, until an enormous wave broke over the ship, burying him up to the neck in water and almost tearing him from the holdings where he clung with all his strength.

As the wave fell back a terrible cry arose from the sea.

Justin, clinging still to the shrouds, bent his head forward to see whence it came. And to his horror and grief, he saw a man's hand and arm strike up for an instant through the foaming wave, and then sink out of sight.

"Great heaven! who is it? Which of my friends has been swept off?" cried Justin, gazing in sorrow upon a calamity that he was powerless to prevent.

But the arm arose no more, and Justin turned his head to look over the portion of the deck that was still above water, to see what had become of his companions.

There were but three of them—Mr. Ely and Mr. Breton, whom the sailors had refused to receive on the heavily-laden life-boat, and Captain McKenzie, whom they would willingly have taken off, but that he regarded it as a point of honour to remain with the passengers whom he was unable to rescue.

Justin, looking all over the deck, saw nothing of these men. Until the moment he had heard the cry of the drowning man, he had been so much absorbed

in watching the fate of the life-boat which contained all that he loved most on earth, that he had quite forgotten his companions in misfortune.

Now, however, he looked around for them with anxiety. One of them was lost—carried off the deck by that last great wave—that was certain; but which one?

Was it either of the two young missionaries who with himself had been abandoned to destruction, or was it the brave and loyal McKenzie, who voluntarily shared the fate of those whom he could not save?

It was impossible as yet to tell; for look as he might, Justin could see neither of his companions.

He tried to think when and where he had seen them last; and he recollected that it was on the starboard gangway where the three stood near together when the first life-boat, containing, besides a portion of the crew, the two young missionary ladies, was preparing to leave the ship. He himself had turned away and followed Britomarte to the stern, and his whole attention had been given to her, until he lowered her into the second life-boat. And after that he had seen no more either of the missionaries or the captain.

Now what had become of them? One was drowned; but where were the others? Justin asked himself the question, and looked about for the answer in vain. They were nowhere in sight. They were not on deck, that also was certain.

It was possible that the two survivors might be in the cabin, which from the position of the wreck was as yet a place of safety. He called aloud with all the strength of his sonorous voice, which rang out clearly above the thunder of the waves:

"Ely! Breton! McKenzie!"

And but the sounding sea replied,
And fast the waves rolled on.

"McKenzie! Breton! Ely!" he called again; but called in vain.

"Oh, the roaring of the sea drowns my voice, I suppose, so that they cannot hear me; but as soon as it is safe to let go these shrouds, if the wreck holds together, I will go down into the cabin and look for them. Great heavens! now I think of it, it must have been McKenzie who was lost. He must have remained on deck. He never would have hidden himself in the cabin," thought Justin, with an accession of sorrow, for he esteemed the brave and loyal captain far more than he did the well meaning but rather weak-minded young missionaries.

In his eager look after his companions, he had ceased to watch the waves, and so he had not observed that the sea arose no higher; that the last great wave was the climax of its swell, and that now it seemed to be gradually subsiding.

His anxiety to search the cabin was now greater than ever; for he "hoped even against hope" to find the good and brave McKenzie safe within its shelter. He waited and watched his opportunity to try to reach the cabin.

When the sea had gone down a little, and the waves came with less force, but long before it was quite safe for him to leave his holding, he let go the shrouds, and began to climb the inclined deck, holding by anything that he could lay his hands on, until he reached the cabin door.

It was a feat of gymnastics to get down the companion ladder; and when he had safely reached the bottom, he inadvertently lost his footing, and slid all the way down the leaning floor, until he was stopped by the opposite partition.

There he arose to his feet, stood ankle deep in water, and looked around. But he could see nothing; it was nearly dark in the cabin, the dead-lights being up, as they had been put at the commencement of the storm. He listened; but he could hear nothing except the beating of the waves that still broke over the wreck, though with decreasing force. Again he called out:

"McKenzie! Breton! Ely! where are you? For heaven's sake, answer!"

But there was no reply. His anxiety became intolerable.

He climbed the leaning floor again, and scaled the companion ladder, and with great difficulty succeeded in taking down the dead-lights and letting daylight into the cabin.

Then he returned to the cabin, and clearly saw its condition.

From the foot of the ladder, the floor inclined at an angle of about forty-five degrees. The highest part near the ladder was free from water, which commenced around the pedestal of the centre-table, and became deeper as the floor was lower, until, at the partition-wall, it was two feet deep.

The chairs and all the moveable furniture had slid down the sloping floor, and lay half submerged and piled against the wall.

The doors of the state-rooms were open, and the furniture within them was in the utmost confusion; and yet everything there—the women's clothing hanging on the pegs or dropped upon the berth, the

little work-basket fallen up-side-down upon the floor, the scattered books, the flute—all was suggestive of life; but it was of desolate life, for all was chaos—still life, for not a living creature was to be seen.

A shock of alarm, almost of conviction, that his three companions had all been lost, struck like an ice-bolt through his heart. He went into all the state-rooms, one by one.

They all exhibited the wild disorder he had partly seen through the open doors; not only that of small sleeping apartments hastily evacuated, but flat consequence upon the hurricane.

The two state-rooms to the right and left of the companion ladder, being in the highest part of the leaning cabin, were comparatively dry; the other two, lower down, were partly submerged.

No human being was to be found in either; but on the upper berth of the spare state-room lay Judith Bioridan's cat, quietly and comfortably nursing her three kittens.

On seeing Justin's face leaning over her, she began to purr with delight.

What a contrast was this picture to all the desolation around!

But Justin turned away sick at heart, to prosecute further what he felt would be a vain search for his missing friends.

The dining-cabin was on the deck above, but it had been so continually swept through by the tremendous seas which had broken over the ship, that it seemed scarcely possible any living creature should have found refuge there; yet as a forlorn hope, he went thither to seek them.

And what a scene of destruction met him there! The sea, that had fallen considerably, no longer swept through it, but everything was shaken together in the maddest medley.

The table, which had been laid for the supper which poor Mrs. Breton so greatly lamented the loss of, was standing in its place, for it was a fixture, and the glasses that were fitted in the swinging rack above the table were also safe, but everything else was thrown out of place and smashed to atoms, or piled up in the lowest part of the leaning floor.

In the highest part of this cabin were two doors, leading into two large state-rooms: the right-hand one as you stood facing them was the captain's private room, the left-hand one was the doctor's.

Justin opened the door of the captain's room, but found it unoccupied.

A sound of pitiful whining and barking came from the doctor's room.

Justin opened the door, and found the doctor's little dog, who leaped upon him with the wildest demonstrations of delight, but otherwise this room, like the captain's, was unoccupied.

And now the anxious dread became a fatal certainty—his companions were all three lost!—swept from the deck by that last overwhelming wave! But yet, stay!—one hope remained. They were not on the wreck, that was certain; but they might have been taken off at the last moment by the first life-boat that had left the ship.

They might have been so taken off without his knowledge, for he had left them standing on the starboard gangway, near the boat in which the two young wives were wildly pleading with the crew to save their husbands; the two young missionaries shivering with agitation in this crisis of their fate, and the captain pale with passion, and stern in his determination to share the fate of his abandoned ship and passengers. So he had left them to follow Britomarte and take her to the other boat, and he had not seen them since!

They might have been saved by the relenting boat's crew; but if so, who was the cast-away that he had seen and heard in the uplifted arm and voice for one instant before he—the cast-away—was whelmed in the sea?

Again came the overpowering conviction—it was the brave McKenzie who was lost. The young missionaries had probably been taken off at the prayers of their wives; for sailors have a soft place in their hearts, or heads, for the woes of women, and will risk much to alleviate them; and so they had probably consented to risk the swamping of their heavily-laden boat by the additional weight of the two young husbands rather than listen to the sobs and cries of the two heart-broken young wives.

But Captain McKenzie had chosen to remain on the wreck with his one abandoned passenger—Justin Rosenthal; and he—the gallant McKenzie—had been swept off the deck and was lost!

Such was the conclusion that Justin came to. And at the thought, he sat down and dropped his head upon his hands and sobbed aloud; for, you see, as I have often said before, the bravest are always the tenderest.

The doctor's little dog, unable to endure such an appalling sight, to him, as a man's distress, jumped and whined around him in sympathetic grief and terror.

At length Justin lifted up his bowed head and tried to bring reason and religion to the relief of his great regret. He reflected that the death of so good a man could but have been a quick passage to eternal bliss—a blessed fate compared to that which awaited himself, left to perish slowly on the abandoned wreck, or that which attended the fugitives in the boats, exposed to battle with the elements, and perhaps with hunger and thirst for days, upon the bare chance of saving their lives.

Somewhat strengthened by the first clause of his reflections upon the eternal destiny of the brave and good captain, and very much distracted by the counter-irritant of his anxiety for the fate of the life-boats, Justin Rosenthal arose to leave the dining-cabin; the little dog jumping and barking around him.

Just as he went out on deck, the sun broke through a mass of black clouds, and striking upon the brasses of the stern, lighted up the whole wreck in a perfect blaze of glory!

It was the same "star of hope" that had been seen by Britomarte from the life-boat, just before the wreck disappeared from her view in the distance. For it must be remembered that the wreck, being much the larger object of the two, and being, besides, hoisted high upon the rocks, was visible to the boat's crew long after the boat was lost to Justin's sight.

By noon the sea had fallen so much, that the whole length of the deck from stem to stern was above the water; and Justin was enabled to take note of the actual condition of the ship.

She remained in the same position, her stern lifted high and wedged tight in the crevice of the rocks, and her deck inclined at a great angle. Her bows were very much broken and her keel was gored by the sharp points of the rocks upon which she had struck and where she was fast fixed.

Her hold must have been full of water, which would have sunk her but for the fact that she was high and fast upon the rocks; that with the rise and fall of the waves the large leaks let out the water as easily as they let it in.

Justin went down to the lower deck and examined the fore-cabin, which he found in an even greater state of chaos than the cabin and the saloon had been. Everything was saturated with sea water.

From there he went into the store-room, which he found in the same condition. All the provisions that could be hurt by salt-water were totally ruined—except a few articles that, being in water-tight receptacles, remained unharmed.

Feeling faint from long fasting, Justin broke open a tin canister of biscuits and sat down to satisfy his hunger upon that dry fare. The little dog that had trotted after him wherever he went, as if afraid of being left behind, now stopped and stood on his hind legs and began to beg, as his poor master, the little Dutch doctor, had taught him to do. Then perceiving that his new master did not notice him, he began to expostulate in short impatient barks.

Justin threw him some biscuits, and leaving him to nibble them, went to the upper deck.

How rapidly the sea had fallen! The jagged rocks upon which the bows of the ship rested were laid bare. The wind had changed, and blew directly off that distant, unknown shore, rolling the fogs out to sea and towards the wreck. While Justin strained his eyes to make out, if he could, what sort of shore it was, he felt something rub against his ankles and heard a mew.

He glanced down and saw the poor cat, who was rubbing her furry sides against his limbs, and mewing pitiously, and gazing up into his face with that helpless, appealing look with which the brute creation in their need seem to pray to the human for relief.

"Poor little animal!" said Justin, stooping, and gently stroking her fur. "Poor little companion in wretchedness! You look up in my face with your perplexed eyes, as if you think I have the power, and ought to have the will, to help you. But you are half-famished, and I have nothing but a biscuit to give you. And, as you are not granivorous, it is not your natural food."

And he broke up the biscuit and scattered the pieces on the deck.

And pussy, granivorous though she was not, pounced upon the fragments as if they had been so many young mice, and devoured them all before she returned to her kittens.

Justin remained on deck until the sun went down; and then through one hour of twilight, and one dark hour that intervened before the moon rose.

Since the wind had sprung up again, the sea had been gradually getting up, so gradually that Justin had not at first perceived the change. But during the interval of that dark hour that preceded the rising of the moon, it had gained so considerably, that when the moon did rise and reveal the scene, Justin saw that it had again covered the rocks upon which the ship rested, and partly covered the bows.

"Ah! the boats! the boats! the wind and the

sea get up again to any height, what will become of them?" he exclaimed in deep anxiety.

He remained on deck watching. The wind and the sea continued to rise. The wind blew furiously, and the waves dashed over the bows of the ship. Justin again climbed up the leaning quarter-deck as far as the stump of the mizen-mast, where again he clung to the shrouds for safety. He thought not of himself! He thought only of the life-boats! and perhaps only of the one that contained Britomarte! With how much good reason he feared for it the reader already knows; for it was in this very gust that the life-boat was swamped.

It was but a short gust—a mere reflex of the late hurricane—and so about midnight the wind suddenly fell, and the waves began to subside.

Then Justin, worn out with long watching, found his way to the cabin, and threw himself upon one of the berths in Britomarte's abandoned state-room.

For some hours he lay, not sleeping, but thinking of her, and praying for her safety. Then, as even convicts sometimes sleep the night before their execution, he, Justin, notwithstanding his own great personal peril, and his excessive anxiety for Britomarte's fate, fell asleep, and slept long and well.

(To be continued.)

The private fortune left by King Leopold is estimated at £3,200,000 sterling.

The marriage of her Royal Highness the Princess Helena and Prince Frederick of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg, it is expected, will take place in the summer of this year. The permanent residence of their Royal Highnesses will be at Frogmore Lodge, in which great improvements are to be made by the introduction of two extra wings. The residence of this amiable princess so near to the Castle will afford much comfort to the Queen, who has long expressed a wish that at least one of her daughters should always be near her.

A GHOST'S STORY.—At a house in Gad's Hill, Kent, in the year 1808, was the following curious sign:—

"Here's to Paul's Pen, d'Assoc. I also, Ur.
Tub. arm le's Smirt Hand F. U. N.
Leftri, and Shipreig N. B. E. ja St. andki N.D.
An Devil's Peak O'F. no N. E."

Which is read thus:—

"Here stop and spend a social hour,
In harmless mirth and fun;
Let friendship reign, be just and kind,
And evil speak of none."

A STAG AT SEA.—The captain of the smack, Gainsbro' Lass reports that, going out to sea on Wednesday, the 29th ult., they picked up a fine stag, in the White Booth Roads, in the Humber. Though nearly exhausted when taken on board, and consequently very quiet, he soon came round, and after being refreshed with carrots, cabbages, &c., he took it into his head to knock everybody down who went near him, and bade fair to take charge of the ship. They managed, however, to keep him till next morning, when, meeting a smack bound for Hull, they transhipped him, glad to get rid of such a passenger. The captain, when he arrived at Hull, handed him over to Mr. S. Fern, who, after securing his legs, put him into his cart, and rightly guessing to whom he belonged, drove him to Burton Constable, where he is now browsing in the park, none the worse for his trip to sea. It appears that Sir Clifford Constable's staghounds met on the 29th ult., at Hedon, and the stag, being pressed, took the Humber, and was picked up as described.

ORIGIN OF THE SIGN OF THE WHITE HART.—It is not perhaps generally known from what circumstance this sign, which is now adopted in so many towns and cities in England, derived its origin. The following account is given by Sir Halliday Wagstaffe, who was keeper of the woods and forests in the reign of Henry VII. It appears that the king, feeling disposed for a day's hunting, repaired to the New Forest for that purpose. A celebrated white hart, which was called Albert, and which was a noble-looking animal, was selected for the day's sport. Albert showed them some fine running, and the chase continued till nearly the close of the day, when at length being hard pressed by the dogs he crossed a river near Ringwood, and finally stood at bay in a meadow; his pursuers came up just at the time the dogs were about to make a sacrifice of their victim, when the ladies interceded for the noble animal. Their intercession was listened to, and the dogs were called off and the animal secured. He was taken into Ringwood, and a gold collar was placed around his neck, and he was removed to Windsor, and Halliday Wagstaffe was that day knighted in Ringwood. The house of entertainment at which the king and his courtiers partook of some refreshment had its sign altered to that of the White Hart, and has retained its name to this day.

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[THE NEW TOWN HALL, HULL.]

THE NEW TOWN HALL, HULL.

THE taste for ornate architecture in public and private edifices is one of the characteristics of the day, and is apparent as much in provincial towns as in the metropolis. As an instance of the former, we give this week an illustration of the New Town Hall at Hull, than which few towns in England can boast of such an elegant building for its municipal purposes.

On the ground floor are situated the offices of the different departments belonging to the corporation, namely, town clerk's, treasurer's, or town-husband's; also the water-rate, and several other subordinate offices.

The entrance-hall and grand staircase have a very noble effect, being lighted by a lantern light; the walls, cornice, columns, and other parts are beautifully decorated with colour and gold, and the columns are painted in imitation of marble. Within a niche upon the first landing of the grand staircase is a figure of Edward the First, the founder of the town, executed in Sclidian marble, by Mr. T. Earle, of London; and upon the upper landing of the staircase it is intended to place a statue, in marble, of Andrew Marvell. Mr. W. D. Keyworth, jun., of London, has been commissioned to execute the same. A marble bust of the late Alderman Blundell, by Mr. W. D. Keyworth, sen., of Hull, is also to be placed there, with busts of other persons who have served the town and corporation from time to time.

From the staircase you pass into a large room, richly decorated with colour; it is named the Mayor's Reception Ordinary-room, and in it covers can be laid for one hundred and fifty persons. Several large committee-rooms, also the council chamber, are approached from the staircase.

Attached to the building is a large sessions-court, where the quarter sessions are held; also the police-court, both of which places are spacious and well ventilated.

The whole of the interior arrangements—furnishing and fittings—are as complete as possible. The decorations are designed and executed in the best taste by and under the superintendence of the architect. It must be a source of pride and satisfaction that the architect and several of the artists

employed upon its decoration are natives of the town.

It is intended to place a full-length portrait of the present mayor, H. J. Atkinson, Esq., in the building by subscription.

MODERN ROBINSON CRUSOE.

WERE any Englishman seized with the morbid fancy of acting the part of Robinson Crusoe, perhaps the first impediment that would seem to oppose the execution of his project would be the difficulty of finding a desert island. He could hardly hope that in these days of universal colonisation, whether by convicts or free settlers, that there remained one vacant isle on the habitable globe.

But in truth there is, not only one but many islands where anybody so minded might become monarch of everything and place within his ken. Of the truth of this an Australian navigator, named Musgrave, has had, within the last two years, positive experience.

Early in the January of 1864 Musgrave left Sydney in command of a small vessel, but being overtaken by adverse weather, suffered shipwreck; but he and his crew escaped in a boat, and were so fortunate as to reach land. They found themselves on an island devoid of human inhabitants, at least, so far as they knew, and which Musgrave's knowledge as a seaman enabled him to recognize as one of the Auckland group.

The prospect was not a very smiling one. A few men thrown on a desert island, 400 miles south of New Zealand, did not seem to face a brilliant future. Still they were better off than the original Crusoe. There was so long without finding a companion, and then only met with a savage. The Australian Crusoes had at least the comfort of companionship.

With the help of a few tools, which they had saved from the wreck, they built a kind of dwelling, and found that the natural resources of the island afforded them tolerable food. There were seals, widgeons, and shell-fish; and in the vegetable line an edible root, which not only supplied the place of bread, but which, submitted to the process of fermentation, made a drink. Mr. Musgrave says, "that was not beer, but which was better than cold water."

Musgrave, the head of this little band of Crusoes, kept a diary, which, amongst a great deal of other

interesting matter, contains curious details about those strange amphibious creatures, seals. These, the diary tells us, are so abundant in the Auckland Islands, that "they go roaring about the woods like wild cattle." Of the ferocity of the old seals in their combats with each other, Musgrave was a personal witness. He says, "they fight as ferociously as dogs, and do not make the least noise, and with their great tusks they tear each other almost to pieces."

During more than a year and a half Musgrave and his little crew remained on the desert island, and all that time they endured not alone the struggle for existence, but those inevitable disaffections, quite as hard to bear, to which human beings under such circumstances are exposed.

By an entry in the diary, made after eighteen months of this lonely living, Captain Musgrave gives us a glimpse of the moral discomforts he was doomed to endure. He says that up to that time the men had behaved respectfully to him, but that he began to detect symptoms of "obstinacy and independence" amongst them.

This entry is made in February, and in May we find that he had found a remedy for an evil that might have entailed serious consequences. He had formed an evening school, and commenced to instruct his men. "Some of them," he says, "cannot read yet, but they are learning very fast, and I have not heard a profane word spoken for a long time. So much for moral suasion." What a touching picture of this humble seaman's efforts to correct the moral evils that had fallen on the little society of which he was the head.

The many-sided miseries to which poor Musgrave was exposed made him at length determine, at any risk, to leave the island. But to traverse 400 miles of sea there were no other means at hand than the little boat which had brought them from the wreck.

Musgrave knew that the attempt was desperate, but he determined to try. It was better than dragging out a miserable existence on a desert island. The boat was fitted out, and victualled as well as circumstances permitted; but then the question arose of who would accompany the captain.

After many discussions and many refusals, two of the men consented to cast their fortunes on the waters, and left with their chef in the little boat. Wonderful to say, that little craft accomplished the

voyage of 400 miles, and landed the strong-hearted Musgrave with his two companions at a New Zealand port, whence a small vessel was sent to fetch those that remained on the island.

The Government of Victoria has sent out a steam-vessel, with Musgrave on board as pilot, to examine the Auckland group minutely, as many vessels having been wrecked off those coasts, it is thought probable that some of the crews might have found shelter on these islands.

WATAWA.

CHAPTER VIII.

As Bessie Lincoln shut herself up in the little cabin on the island, after the departure of her brother, she felt unusually happy.

Like the day, with its soft sunshine and with its gentle zephyrs, so was her heart.

Her young life had never seemed sweeter to her than at that moment.

Seating herself on a lounge at one side of the apartment, she placed her feet upon one of the footstools gracing the cabin, and gave herself up to the thoughts incidental to the occasion.

What an embodiment of the sweet reveries of maidenhood she presented!

Her father was still absent, but she was brave and experienced, and had often been left in charge of the premises, during the necessary absence of Mr. Lincoln and Thomas, so that she had no fears or apprehensions.

It was enough, she thought, that she had locked and barred the outer door securely—that the cabin was stout, and that her dear father would soon be with her.

She mused, therefore, the little innocent, at peace with herself and with all her surroundings, and as happy as thoughtful.

Her first musings, of course, were of her brother and Jenny Hale, for she knew why the young hunter was so often drawn down the river.

It was pleasant for her to remark to herself how much the young couple thought of each other, and to contemplate the world of joy and beauty in which they were living.

She smiled dreamily as she recalled how affectionate Thomas had lately been to her, because she loved Jenny, and how much Jenny embraced and kissed her, because she had such a nice brother.

Regarding thus with her mind's eye the happiness of the lovers, a tremor of sympathetic emotion passed over her form, and her beautiful face acquired a heightened colour, which was at once radiant and winsome.

Her eyes, too, grew bright with the vividness of her thoughts, and yet their gaze was fixed and dreamy, as if her soul had taken the relations of Thomas and Jenny as the basis of a day-dream involving her own future.

In truth, as she recalled what Thomas had said to her about the expected arrival of Robert Hale, she naturally indulged in some pleasant speculations concerning the young stranger.

She had never experienced the sweet emotions of love, as understood by lovers, but Jenny Hale had said so much to her about Robert that she was more than curious to see him.

Through the loving descriptions of Jenny, she already knew the age of the young man, the colour of his eyes and hair, his height and complexion, his tastes and accomplishments, and all the facts that a verbal portrait could present to her.

She knew, moreover, that Jenny had often written to her brother concerning her, and that she and Thomas had both prophesied over and over again that Robert would fall in love with her at the first moment of their meeting.

"How absurd!" she murmured, as her thoughts reached this exciting point. "How absurd to suppose that a young student fresh from college, with his head full of Greek and Latin, will see anything to admire in a girl of the backwoods! He must have seen plenty of girls more attractive than me!"

Arising, she placed herself before a little mirror hanging against one of the walls of the room, and turned her head from side to side, much as a bird regards an object inquisitively, and scrutinized her reflection a minute or two in silence.

She at length resumed her seat, with that vague sigh with which all girlhood is familiar.

Thinking about Jenny and Thomas, she incidentally reviewed the relations of the two families.

On the arrival of the Hales—the father and mother, with Jenny—at the settlement, they had at once become intimate with the Lincolns, and out of this intimacy had grown the most cordial friendship on the part of all the members of each family, as was natural.

The friendship had been such that Mr. and Mrs. Hale had both been attended in their last moments by all the Lincolns, and that Jenny, since the death of her parents, and while awaiting the arrival of her brother from England, had regarded the Lincolns as her best friends, and not without reason.

Indeed, the friendship between Thomas and Jenny had resulted as such friendships frequently do, by giving place to a stronger emotion, as we have already seen, and it was no secret to anybody at the settlement that they were keeping company with each other.

The relations, moreover, of Bessie and Jenny to each other were of the most pleasant description, as Mr. Lincoln had stated to Robert.

They often exchanged visits, and had become as intimate and confidential in all their intercourse as sisters.

It was natural, therefore, that Bessie should thus think of her friend and associate at that moment, and extend her musings to her father, to Robert, to his deceased parents, and even to her own future.

"Would it not be strange," she soon resumed, with quickened pulse, "if Robert Hale and I should—should really fall in love with each other, and if—if we should marry? And yet we—Jenny and I—should merely exchange brothers!"

While she was thus musing, the strange savage who had concealed himself in her bed-room, bringing with him the lifeless form of a beautiful Indian girl, remained grimly quiet.

He had placed the dead Indian maiden on Bessie's couch, and put his rifle in the corner nearest the entrance, but he retained his other weapons and his ghastly robe, and his mien continued to be active and menacing, as he maintained his post of observation close to the door, as recorded.

Once or twice he stooped, looking through the key-hole, and appeared to make a mental comparison between the dead Indian and Bessie, but not the least trace of emotion appeared on his hideous visage.

Only, to have looked at his grim face, and at the light burning in his dark eyes, an observer would have seen that he was ruled by a settled and terrible purpose, that connected the dead with the living.

Suddenly, Bessie started to her feet, exclaiming:

"Dear me, what am I thinking about? It's time for father to come home, and there's no supper ready for him!"

She hastened to put the wood on the fire, and accelerated its combustion by a pair of bellows.

"What will father like best?" she asked herself, when the fire was sufficiently kindled. "A nice slice of venison, no doubt, with what remains of the succotay we had for dinner."

She drew a substantial oak table without leaves into the centre of the apartment, washed her hands, and brought out of a little pantry the necessary dishes and materials to prepare supper.

The table was soon covered with a white cloth, and supplied with the basis of a nice repast, including some large slices of white bread, a pot of yellow butter, a great dish of fresh strawberries (for at that season strawberries were to be seen on every table in the settlement), and a pitcher of cream.

The death of Bessie's mother, several years before the date of our story, had naturally thrown upon the maiden the cares of keeping house, and she had early become proficient in the preparation of all the simple dishes known to the *cuisine* of the settlement.

She performed her duties, therefore, with a skill and taste that added not a little to the happiness of the family.

When the basis of the supper was laid to her satisfaction, she took a knife in her hand, lifted a trap-door in one corner of the room, and descended into a little cellar, which was clear and neat, with stone walls, and a hard, smooth bottom.

This little cellar was liberally supplied with articles of food, barrels and bins being ranged along the walls, and half filled with vegetables of various kinds, the remains of the stores of the preceding winter.

A haunch of venison hung from one of the huge sleepers overhead, some wild turkeys and other birds were pendant at a little distance, and there was a barrel of salted meat in one corner of the cellar, as a provision against any emergency that might arise, such as the breaking out of hostilities with the Indians.

Upon a broad bench near the centre of the cellar was a row of pans of milk, upon which a rich cream had collected, and there were here and there other objects which spoke well for the material comfort of the family, and attested that Mr. Lincoln had the merit so much esteemed in those serious days—namely, that of being "a good provider."

Securing a nice slice of venison, Bessie hastened upstairs, closing the trap, and proceeded to place the steak over the coals on a gridiron.

In a little pot suspended to the crane, in one corner of the huge fireplace, there was a liberal quantity of

green corn and beans, which the young housekeeper placed nearer the fire, and which soon simmered and sputtered in a very pleasing manner.

In the ashes slumbered several large white potatoes, which had been placed there previous to Bessie's presentation to the reader, and which she now drew out and put on a plate, finding them done.

In a few minutes the steak was nicely broiled, and Bessie mounted a high chair near the centre of the room, to survey through the little window of the cabin the surface of the river and the adjacent shores. A look of disappointment mantled her features, she seeing no signs of her father's return.

Placing the steak under a tin reflector, at a proper distance from the fire, and in proximity to the potatoes, she murmured:

"It is full time for father's return. I think that something must have delayed him."

Again seating herself on the lounge, she resumed her musings about Jenny and Thomas, and about Jenny's brother, mingling them with some gathering anxieties about her father.

While she was thus waiting and musing, the savage concealed in the adjoining room regarded her through the keyhole with a fixed look of triumph.

He had been able, by the double espionage of sight and hearing, and even by the sense of smell, to keep himself informed of the culinary proceedings of the maiden, and he drew himself up with an air indicative of a conviction that the time for him to act had come.

In the midst, therefore, of Bessie's musings, the door of the bed-room was noiselessly opened, and the strange savage emerged into the main apartment of the cabin, closing the door behind him, so as to shut out from Bessie's view the corpse he had brought with him.

Moving silently and stealthily in his soft moccasins, he advanced to the centre of the room, smiling grimly, his lips parted, his features rigid with the intensity of his emotions, and his burning, blood-shot eyes bent gloatingly upon the face and form before him.

A slight, rasping sound on the floor by his feet, or by one of them, caused Bessie to start and turn her glances upon him.

The effect of the horrible apparition, so suddenly and unexpectedly presented, can be imagined.

With a wild shriek she sprang to her feet, and looked searchingly around, at the door, at the window, and even at the trap leading below, and at the stairs leading to the chamber, evidently asking herself how he had gained admission to the cabin, and whether he was attended by a band of his followers or not.

It was evident that she recognized the terrible intruder by his garb, and that she was familiar with his dreadful reputation, for her accents revealed the utmost horror and repugnance, as she faltered:

"Scalp-Robe?"

As this cry of recognition burst from her, she involuntarily took a hasty step or two towards the entrance, but an instant perception of the impossibility of flight checked her, and she sank upon the lounge from which she had arisen, and became deathly pale.

At the same instant the Indian advanced to the outer door, withdrew the key from the lock, and secured it on his person.

"Oh, horror!" murmured Bessie, recognizing the perils and menaces of the intrusion. "What shall I do?"

The savage approached her, regarding her with glances in which admiration, contentment, and revengeful triumph were equally dominant, as he said:

"Let the flower of the pale-faces have no fear. The Son of the Cataract has come to woo her. He comes like the lightning, he comes like the tempest! His footsteps are like the feet of the winds, and his enemies know not where to seek him."

He spoke in hoarse and guttural tones, but his words, although inflated and pompous, after the manner of his people, displayed such familiarity with the language that a hearer would have been curious to know where and how he had acquired it.

His words, however, were unheeded by Bessie, for her senses were in a whirl that did not permit her to receive their purport or meaning.

She knew that the presence of the savage was a menace of the most startling nature.

She was self-possessed enough, however, to reflect that her father's arrival was likely from moment to moment, and that it would be wise for her to retain the Indian at the cabin as long as possible.

She therefore mastered the terror and consternation she had experienced, and assumed an air of ease she could not feel, as she said:

"Let the Son of the Cataract be seated. The daughter of the pale-face knows how to do the great warrior honour."

The eyes of the intruder acquired an additional

gleam, as these words fell upon his hearing, and as Bessie waved him politely to a chair. He was evidently delighted with his reception. He wrapped his ghastly robe complacently around him, with a slowness which answered very well for dignity, placed himself deliberately in the proffered chair, facing the maiden, and continued to bend his earnest gaze upon her.

"The great chief is strong?" said Bessie, after a pause, thinking it politic to inquire after his health. The grim features of the intruder relaxed visibly, as he responded:

"Waugh! The Great Eagle is mighty. His bones are like rock, his eyes see like the sun!"

Drawing nearer the table and displaying increased admiration for the maiden, he resumed:

"The daughter of the pale-faces is like the laughing waters. She was born in the sunlight, she has dwelt among flowers. Her eyes are like stars. Her form is like the form of the young deer. She good and brave squaw. She cheer the Great Eagle's wigwam!"

He sniffed the savoury odour that came from the venison steak, and drew up to the table with an imperative gesture to Bessie to serve him.

Pale and agitated, but with sufficient presence of mind to reflect anew that a delay was desirable in view of her father's expected return, she complied with the wishes of the savage, and placed the steak before him.

He ate a portion of it ravenously, and then, with a glance at the baked potatoes on the hearth, made a sign for Bessie to bring them, and drew a bottle of whiskey from a pocket under his robe.

"The Son of the Cataract is thirsty," he resumed, uncorking the bottle. "For long time he not taste the fire-water. He on the secret path. He looking for his enemies. A mighty thought filled him. But the heart of the Great Eagle is now glad. His eyes behold the light of his wigwam. He make his heart sunshine!"

With this, he took a large draught from the bottle, and then made another gesture, with a glance at the pot over the fire, for Bessie to bring him the succotay.

The poor girl obeyed, and then returned to her seat on the lounge, still pallid and excited, but retaining her self-possession.

"Good and brave squaw," he repeated, after tasting the corn and beans. "She cook nice suppers. She rejoice the Great Eagle when he is hungry!"

He continued to eat ravenously, and with the wild and eager joy with which a half-starved wolf attacks an unexpected banquet.

"The squaw of the Great Eagle dead," he continued, looking at Bessie. "She been dead three full moons. The Great Eagle's wigwam lonely. That's why he has chosen the flower of the pale-faces from among her people."

The steak soon disappeared entirely, and was followed by the succotay, by several slices of bread, two or three potatoes, and the whole dish of strawberries, washed down with the pitcher of cream and another large dram of whiskey.

At length, when he had cleared the table, the intruder turned to Bessie, remarking:

"The daughter of the pale-face is sad."

The poor girl's heart was too full to answer. She had hoped and prayed, while witnessing the repast of the savage, that something would occur for her relief—that her father would come, or that her brother would unexpectedly return—and even with this hope it had demanded all her courage and patience for her to sit so motionless and silent during all those long and agonizing minutes.

"The flower of the pale-faces is surprised to see the Great Eagle," proceeded Scalp-Robe. "She did not see him come to the white chief's wigwam."

As many as were her terrors, Bessie resolved to detain the intruder still longer at the cabin, and she said: "I suppose the great warrior entered when my brother and I were on the shore."

"Wise squaw!"

And he nodded, with a laugh.

"You were hid on the island when I went out and met Thomas?"

He again nodded.

"You knew that my father was absent?"

"Waugh! the Great Eagle watching," he answered, with joy revealing itself through the paint on his visage. "The Son of the Cataract is wise. He sees from the great seas to the great mountains."

The maiden was silent, wondering to herself if there was any chance of her father's return in time to interfere with the projects of the savage.

The chief seemed to divine her thoughts, for he laughed coarsely, regarding her with a brutal look of triumph, and at length said:

"The squaw thinks empty words. The great warrior of her people will not come again."

There was such a decided and cruel conviction expressed in the voice of the Indian, that the hearer's heart sank within her.

"My father will not come again?" she murmured, in a faltering voice; "and why not?"

"Because the warriors of the Great Eagle have got him. The great chief of the pale-faces will hunt the deer no more. He will not return to his wigwam!"

The continued tone of seriousness and conviction in which these statements were uttered made them painful beyond expression to the hearer. The deliberate manner, too, in which he had eaten his supper, and the utter absence of haste and anxiety from his manner were terrible barriers in the way of the wild hope of rescue she had cherished.

She saw that a horrible plot had been formed against her and her father, and recalled with inexpressible emotions the anxieties and apprehensions which had induced Mr. Lincoln to go scouting that afternoon.

"Oh, my father, my father!" she murmured, forgetting her own perils. "What can have happened? Where is he at this moment?"

The Indian took another drink from his bottle and arose from the table. What with his repast, the whiskey, and his joy of heart, his dark face had become flushed, and his eyes gleamed like fire.

He patted Bessie on the head soothingly, looked from the window of the cabin, fixed his tomahawk loosely in his belt, and regarded his intended captive with a horrible leer, as he nodded mysteriously towards her bedroom.

"The Great Eagle is happy," he muttered; "his heart is as light as a feather. The eyes of the White Fawn shine like moons upon him. But it is time to prepare for our departure. The Son of the Cataract and his new squaw must away to the hills. And their steps will be well hidden."

(To be continued.)

CASTLES IN THE AIR.

CHAPTER I.

"A LETTER from your Uncle Robert, James."

The speaker—an elderly lady, her silver-grey hair put away under a widow's close cap—sat beside her little sewing-table, an oil lamp diffusing a dim light over the open sheet on her lap, while the wood fire crackled noisily in the stove.

It was a cold winter night. The young man who had just entered, and was in the act of removing his heavy overcoat, shivered with the sharp, frosty air, which might well be after his solitary walk of two long miles.

"I hardly thought to find you up, mother," was his careless rejoinder, as he stepped up and spread his hands over the genial heat. "A letter from Uncle Robert, did you say? Why, what has led him to write at last? and in what part of the world is he now?"

"He knew of your father's death," pursued the widow, in a low voice, as if attending more to her own thoughts than the tenour of her son's questions. "He seems to have a very clear idea of the struggle we have had to keep up before the world, and out of debt. Now, at the last, he makes you a very generous offer. Strange, he should not have remembered that he had relatives in this little, out-of-the-way place before!"

"What does he offer me, mother?"

The young man's tones expressed a sudden interest.

"He offers you a clerkship, James. But read the letter for yourself," and she held it out towards him.

It consisted of rather more than a page, scrawled in a rough, business-like hand; a simple announcement that Robert Sinclair had suddenly called to mind the fact that he had a nephew, a poor farmer boy, in a sterile village, and that, in consideration of his orphan condition, he was disposed to take upon himself the care of his future prospects.

The last fact was made known by the offer of a respectable clerkship in his own large establishment, with a salary which should not be merely nominal, but amply sufficient for his own wants and the support of his mother, whether she chose to remain in her present quiet retreat, or to hazard the inconveniences of a city residence for the sake of being near her son.

"If I only were competent!" said James, throwing down the letter on the table, and thrusting his hand through his thick, dark locks.

"I am sure you are fully competent," said his mother, warmly. "You had the name of being the best arithmetician in the school; and what you don't know can be easily learned."

James sat reflecting. A girl's face, with soft, hazel eyes, and an abundance of silken brown hair, looked out of the coils on which his downcast eyes rested. He had parted with her only an hour ago, on her own threshold, with the fresh words of an avowal upon his lips, thrust back by the picture of weary years of waiting, and the bitter uncertainty of his condition.

His farm, small as it was, lay under a mortgage; his feeble, aged mother was dependent upon his industry. What right had he to think of a wife?

To-night, what a glowing vision his uncle's letter opened. With the eagerness natural to youth, he saw nothing of the chances which might interpose between; he felt only that all his wishes in life were about to be crowned with fruition.

Mrs. Lawson retired to her chamber to think over thankfully her son's prospects on her sleepless pillow; while the young man himself took out pen and paper to accept, without delay, his uncle's offer, and afterwards, surrendered himself to a long day-dream by the smouldering fire. "Castles in the air" rose and fell in the dying coals. It was like a fairy dream, to have a strong hand unexpectedly stretched out to him in the perplexities of his situation.

The chill of the room aroused him at last to retire to his chamber; and after lingering at the window to cast a glance outside on the white fields which had never before looked so radiant under the silver moon, he crept up the staircase. He must not rouse his mother, but no need of cautious footsteps to-night. Joy kept both waking.

A new thought came to him ere he closed his eyes, one which banished for the moment his transport of satisfaction. He had forgotten that this change would necessitate a long separation from Constance. It was the first cloud rising up in his future—the shadow which in our earthly lot ever walks hand in hand with joy.

One little week saw the few preparations of the mother and son completed, the arrival of the looker-for reply from the brother and uncle, and the two, parting with many good wishes from their humble neighbours, on their way to their new place of abode.

James had called to bid Constance adieu on the eve of their separation. He had looked to see her alone on this parting visit; but, greatly to his disappointment, other friends were collected in the little parlour, and only a word or two could he contrive to utter as she gave him her hand, with downcast and sorrowful eyes, at the door.

"May I write to you, Constance? I shall often think of you. It will be lonely among strangers."

He blamed himself for the tame words; but others would not come, with the ring of voices through the open door behind them, and the deep and real emotion which checked his speech in such an hour.

"I—I shall always be glad to hear from you, James. I hope you will prosper, and be happy."

He felt the chill of the answer; but the tremulous voice, and the flutter of the hand in his, vibrated to another tone.

The door closed, and he had caught the last vision of the soft, hazel eyes, and thoughtful, girlish face for long, long years.

The night was clear and frosty as he stepped out under the winter sky.

The icicles hung in glittering spray from the orchard trees, the stars shone overhead a glittering host, the pine woods, spreading away to the north, rose up in their evergreen freshness.

"After all, a country life is pleasant," thought the young man, as he crossed into the road. "It is hard to part with Constance. I wish the dear old home-stead was ours, and that my uncle's kind plan had never been."

Did he wish so? No, not down in his heart; for there slumbering ambitions were just warming into life.

CHAPTER II.

THE first year of James's new life went by slowly. He wrote often to Constance, and received frequent letters. The opening of his new career had hardly proved what he had anticipated; it had turned out to be much more laborious and painstaking than his first rapid glimpses of it had pictured. It might have been this consciousness of the many obstacles which still lay in the path of fortune, and the necessity of a protracted waiting, which held his pen from the avowal he had secretly meant to make at his parting from his mistress; but, be this as it may, their correspondence partook more of the character of the fraternal relation than an open and authorised understanding of attachment. True, James often spoke of a longed-for visit to Barnet, if his uncle would only consent to a short absence from his duties, which, with all his ample hints, seemed not to enter into that gentleman's thoughts. And twice or thrice his little missives contained presents, which, though simple in themselves—a ring for the slender finger, which, by some curious guess, it fitted as an exact measurement; a miniature which bore a striking likeness to the handsome farmer boy, refining under the influences of city life—were certainly suggestive of a tender meaning to be spoken out when the hour of circumstances permitted.

By-and-by the letters grew less frequent, and a

new tone crept in. Constance felt it like a shadow falling over the white page, while she could as yet trace out no precise diminution of the old frank-falling words. Yes she was right.

By-and-by, without a word of explanation, they ceased altogether; and too maidenly to ask the cause, she surrendered herself in silence to the long, dreary waiting, the painful suspense, sure to be ended, as it was, by the rumour of James Lawson's approaching marriage.

It was a rash and wicked step. The deserted girl felt it to be so; and, though she knew that such false deeds bring their sure reward, it was no comfort through the blinding mist of tears which followed upon this first discovery. If he had only told her—if he had only been frank! Why could he not have been?

The young man's engagement had, in fact, come about very suddenly.

It was his uncle's ward, Anne Richards, who had won upon his unsteady fancy, and by her wealth and showy attractions lured him, in an unfortunate moment, to forget the woman who, after all, in his secret heart, he loved with a deeper and truer passion.

Anne was gay, beautiful, and "in love with him." His uncle lost no opportunities of throwing the young people together. His mother—poor, fond woman!—was enchanted with the match.

He yielded—yielded against his better reason, and slipped into the avowal on a sudden occasion—the avowal from which there was no drawing back.

It was all for the best, he argued, as his uncle greeted him with the promise of receiving him, upon his return from his bridal tour, as a junior partner in the firm—a step which, in any event, would soon have been rendered necessary by his increasing age and infirm health; but whether this choice would have lighted upon him without his bride's portion, was a doubtful question.

"Constance would have had a weary waiting. I have stepped into wealth, if not into happiness. But now how to write to her! I cannot bear to think of it. How she will feel!"

He did write, though, a short, brotherly letter, which he flung into the flames; a second shared the same fate; a third was more successful.

"I ask your sisterly blessing," he said, "upon my approaching marriage; it is a union of circumstances, rather than of choice. To no one else should I dare to speak as freely but to you, who have always understood me. My promised bride is good, pure—all that I could ask in a woman. I hope for a moderate measure of happiness. I have told her of you, and she wishes to know you. Let me hope that the day is not far distant when you will become mutually acquainted."

A plain gold ring, a miniature in its worn case, enclosed in a snowy envelope, marked by the well-known hand, was all the answer which came back to this epistle; but it seemed fraught with an earnest language, for Lawson's face blanched to a sickly whiteness as he received it, in his chamber, on the morning of his marriage day.

"You are ill, my son," said his mother, as she passed him, in her rustling silk dress, on his way down to the hall. "What is the matter?"

"Nothing, mother," he answered, almost roughly. "I am, or ought to be, very happy."

She looked at him: a recollection of her own happy marriage days came back. She had known poverty, but love had lightened it; after all, was this splendour worth the price?

The wedding took place in the church; it was thrown open to a crowd of curious spectators on the occasion. The bride was very fair, in her orange wreath and white veil. The party was distinguished-looking and unexceptionable.

What a match for the farmer boy! What a step from poverty to the height of grandeur! Rumour whispered that the bride brought half a million for her dowry. But Lawson's face, borrow as he might the semblance of joy, wore a shadow after all.

In two matters the young couple were destined to find themselves deceived before the honeymoon had quite waned. Anne believed her husband to have been chosen by his uncle as his heir; but in this she was mistaken, as Mr. Lawson had a daughter, married and residing in Scotland.

Lawson, on his part, learned that his wife was not the heiress he had supposed her, for when the day of question came, her half million had dwindled to a paltry twenty thousand.

CHAPTER III.

Two-thirds of the bride's portion went into the senior Mr. Lawson's firm; the remainder rented and fitted up a handsome establishment, the expenses of which James's income as a junior partner was to supply.

Anne opened her married life by a brilliant entertainment, and plunged at once into the dissipation of the world of fashion. Lawson immersed himself in his business, and soon settled down into the neglectful, matter-of-fact husband of society.

Did no regrets find a place in his heart for the fading of his early dreams? Certainly his married life was very different from his boyish pictures. I cannot tell: he had married for money and position, and in the commencement, at least, he should have been content with his choice.

In the second year of his marriage, two important events took place—the death of his mother, and the birth of a daughter.

Old-fashioned ways annoyed and mortified his young wife, who gladly kept her in the background from the observation of her friends; and the old lady, sensitive to slights, had begun to realize her lessened importance, and that her daughter-in-law had developed into another person from the charming young lady whom she had seen about to accept her son's hand.

It was better as it was!

James Lawson had a keen sense of this fact as he bent over his mother's coffin, and cast a last look upon the still form, stretched in its everlasting repose. What had his wealth and honours brought to her? Little, indeed, but disappointment and pain. Perhaps they would both have been happier in that quiet country village; happier to have declined his uncle's dazzling offer, and never to have quitted it.

The birth of his child awoke a new fountain of feeling, and a rekindled tenderness towards his neglected mother.

For the first time the ill-mated pair seemed on the eve of a better understanding; but, with returning strength, Anne's old love of pleasure resumed its sway.

She left her infant to the care of its nurse, and went out again into the world. Lawson offered but few remonstrances; perhaps he saw the uselessness of words; but emotions of bitter resentment surged up in his breast.

The time had long passed—waxed, indeed, in the eve of their short honeymoon—when he had loitered in gay ball-rooms with this radiant creature at his side, or worried out the opera, a score of glances directed at his box, which ensnared the belle of the evening. Anne was gay and charming; no wonder she loved the admiration so lavishly showered upon her.

But there was another side to the matter. It was a dreary affair to come home to a deserted dining-room and cheerless drawing-room; to see a neglected work-stand opposite his arm-chair, and to miss the bright, glad face which should have been there to welcome him after the fatigues of the day.

Beside, these dissatisfactions began to wear heavily upon his credit. He had borne leniently with them at first, but the time had fully come in which he must speak.

He did so, to be answered, as might have been foreseen, with impatient disdain.

"I should like to know what has become of my twenty thousand pounds, Mr. Lawson? I am sure I am more economical than most ladies in my position. There is Mrs. Thornton; her husband's income does not exceed yours, yet she came out, at Wilkes's last night, with diamonds. The only jewels you have given me since our marriage is a set of pearls."

"Mr. Thornton has an unfavourable reputation," observed her husband, wisely avoiding the first sentence of her remarks, though it sent the hot blood to his cheek; "people say he gambles."

"All nonsense," said the lady, shortly. "Mrs. Thornton lives in style; she has every wish gratified. I wish I had married as well."

"Since you have not," said her husband, "try to be content with your fortune. My dear, you will be sorry to hear that my next quarter's allowance has been drawn, and is already expended."

"Your uncle should allow you more; he is niggardly. He should allow you half of the profits of the business; it all comes upon your shoulders."

"No," said Lawson, firmly, "no, Anne, you know very little of these matters to say that; he has been generous with me, and if he were to allow me half of the profits, the sum would not meet our present style of living. We must retrench."

Mrs. Lawson pouted.

"I don't know what we can retrench in," she said, moodily.

"Give up the entertainment you were planning for next week," suggested her husband.

"I can't," said the lady, angrily. "I have made all my arrangements, and even talked it over to Miss Toulan. I can't draw back from it, and I wouldn't if I could."

Mr. Lawson sighed. The street-bell rang; the servant came running upstairs.

This conversation had taken place in his wife's dressing-room, where she was dressing for the last night of the opera.

"Mr. Richards is below, ma'am."

"I'll be down in a moment, Mary," and Mrs. Lawson began to gather up her cloak.

"It's of no use," thought her husband, as the door closed upon her retreating form; "I can't have the face to ask Uncle Lawson for a larger share of the profits. I must retrench; if I don't we shall go to ruin."

He went down to his lonely dining-room, which had never looked lonelier, with the deserted work-stand opposite his chair, and took up his evening paper.

CHAPTER IV.

Mrs. Lawson did not retrench. An unexpected event came round; the death of a distant relative, whose will, making her the sole heir, bequeathed her a handsome property. Mr. Lawson was certainly a fortunate man.

First, his uncle had reached out a helping hand to him in his poverty-stricken country life; advanced him, in time, to the profits of a lucrative partnership; and lastly, his wife, who had brought him a modest dowry on her wedding-day, had fallen into the possession of a large fortune.

It was singular that Mr. Lawson's clouded face evinced no outward tokens of a consciousness of his prosperity.

Though still in the flush of early manhood, delicately graven lines had begun to make their appearance upon his smooth brow, and silver threads were sprinkling his brown locks.

Like many a man before him, he was immersing himself, heart and soul, in the cares and excitement of business, striving thus to lose sight of the one great mistake of his life.

Eight—sixteen years went by, quite uneventfully, to careless eyes.

All that Mr. Lawson's hand touched prospered. His uncle's death left him at the head of the establishment which he had entered as a poor clerk. Mrs. Lawson made her appearance in the sultry summer months at Brighton or Scarborough in satins and diamonds. People began to talk of Mr. Lawson as a millionaire.

At this period, at the height of his prosperity, came the first startling reverse in Mr. Lawson's smooth life.

It was not loss of property; wealth seemed, by a liberal fate, to be inseparable from his lot; but a domestic calamity, far more terrible in its humiliation and pain than any outward reverses could have been.

His young daughter, Constance—he had given her, in her cradle, the name of his first love—cloped from her boarding-school with a stranger, leaving no trace of the path she had taken behind her.

Had she died in her fresh youth, he would have felt the bitterness of the shock; but he would have laid her away in her grave, and found the mournful consolation of raising a costly monument, emblazoned with a tribute to her modest virtues, above the spot. But to know that she was living, to know, as his secret consciousness told him, when the few scanty particulars of her flight had been gathered—that she was living that lost life which folds up in itself an eternity of retribution!

He could not turn to his wife for comfort; her anguish was terrible to witness. He could not wreak out his revenge on the chief actor in the dark drama, for he was beyond his reach. He could only submit in sullen wretchedness to the blow.

Mrs. Lawson sunk under it. It may seem strange that a woman possessed of so little feeling should have worn into her grave under such a sorrow; but there is often a tender place in the hearts of the most selfish. Mrs. Lawson had idolized her daughter; her whole heart was bound up in her; and the cruel anguish of the shock, the utter hopelessness of its character, were more than her delicate frame could bear.

In less than a twelvemonth from the day of her daughter's disappearance, her husband saw her laid in her grave, with the sullen calm of resignation upon his face.

He went back to his business, to his old absorbed life, his brown locks now turned to iron grey, and the deep lines of thought traced upon his brow.

It was upon the third day after the funeral, as he sat alone in his deserted drawing-room, his eye listlessly wandering to the closed piano, which had rung out such inspiring strains in the long ago, under his wife's jewelled fingers, that a servant brought him a letter, which had come in by the evening post, and had, by some strange oversight, been directed to his residence instead of his place of business.

The handwriting of the superscription was fami-

lar, but he could not recall where he had seen it. He drew out the folded sheet carefully, but the first lines held his attention.

"Ma. Lawson:—Your daughter lies at my house very ill. She has been suffering from a brain fever, from which she is slowly recovering. Her mental condition is deplorable; she needs deeply your forgiveness and sympathy. Will you break the news to her mother, and let me hear from you at the earliest possible moment?"

"CONSTANCE MORTON."

A hard, stern expression settled upon Mr. Lawson's face as he put down the note. What had she suffered, this wretched, sinning girl, in comparison with the anguish which had brought her mother to her grave, and whitened, as in a single week, her father's locks?

"I have no daughter," he muttered, with Spartan firmness, as he turned his eyes on the dreary December storm which was raging outside the window. "She chose between us and that villain; she chose to heap upon us shame and misery after all our love. Let her keep to her choice—I shall make no answer."

He did not even bend to examine the postmark—for the note, in the evident hurry in which it was written, bore no date—as, on entering the dining-room, he flung it inside the glowing grate, where the tongue of flame changed it in a moment to a crisp scroll.

It might have been the signature attached to the letter, the sight of the old familiar name, or it might have been the mere fact of his loneliness, and the sadness which ever follows upon so near a bereavement; but as he sat alone that evening, with his paper held idly upon his knee, his thoughts wandered back to the dream of his youth, for the first time in many long years.

He wondered if Constance was still unmarried. His heart gave a quick throb as he pondered the question. She had certainly loved him in those old days, and he had loved her.

CHAPTER V.

Six months from the date of his wife's demise, saw Mr. Lawson in a railway train bound for the vicinity of the old home which he had quitted more than twenty years before to enter upon a new and prosperous life.

To-day his name was known upon Change; wealth beyond all his expectations flooded his coffers; his conscience, in its strict mercantile integrity, was free from a solitary stain; and yet the man had lost something which the boy had known—a happy, buoyant heart.

Was this Barnett?

He looked on all sides as the train halted at the station, and he quitted the platform. New houses had sprung up; in the valley below the hill the steaming pipe of a factory rose above a straggling village; the old, grey church was replaced by a neat modern edifice; even the little graveyard to the left was not free from the innovation of tall monuments. A dreary, sinking sensation curdled round his heart; he could no longer keep back from himself the true object of his journey to this long-forgotten spot. It was not to revive the memories of his youth, to look upon old scenes under new aspects, but a romantic pilgrimage to seek out the woman who in those early days had filled his dreams. How could he hope to find her unchanged?

He walked straight to the new hotel, whose flaunting red sign promised hospitality, and engaged lodgings.

This done, he went out on a quiet stroll, and proceeded with leisurely steps to the house which he had quitted so many years before, with very different emotions from those which now stirred his bosom.

Here very little had changed; the lilacs—it was June—were crowded with spikes of purple flowers, and the pinks and marigolds in the well-kept garden shone with the freshness imparted by a late shower.

Mr. Lawson drew a heavy breath as he stepped on the grey door-stone.

He had asked the landlord a question at the inn, but the man was a new-comer, and entirely a stranger to the old residents in the quiet part of the village.

As he paused his ear caught the tones of a woman's voice through the open window. They came back to him laden with a distinct recollection out of the past, and without a second pause, he proceeded to knock.

"Is Miss Arnold in?" It was Constance's mother, changed a trifle by the wear of twenty years, her silver hair put away now under her white cap, who confronted him upon the threshold.

"Miss Arnold?" The old lady looked a little bewildered. "Oh, you mean my daughter, sir—Mrs. Morton that is? Won't you please to walk in? Who shall I tell her, sir, wants to see her?"

Mr. Lawson felt very much like making a retreat, but this was not now practicable. He followed the old lady into the little parlour, which, with its fireplace filled with green boughs, and its centre-table strewn with a few plainly bound books, presented much the appearance of the old times.

"A friend of hers, ma'am," said Mr. Lawson, shrinking from the enunciation of his name. He wished himself heartily from the spot.

The old lady went out; the space of a full minute passed, when the door again opened, and a fair, still youthful-looking woman, arrayed in a widow's deep weeds, entered.

Mr. Lawson rose, the words of greeting died upon his lips, as he extended his hand in an awkward and embarrassed silence.

A deep flush mounted to the lady's cheek; she had recognized him upon the instant; but her manner resumed in a moment its tone of self-possession.

"You have come in search of your daughter, Mr. Lawson?" she said, taking his outstretched hand. "I was sure you would repeat."

"My daughter!" said the gentleman, finding his voice, in amazement.

"You made no reply to my note," observed Mrs. Morton.

"I was not aware—" said Mr. Lawson, in extreme bewilderment; and an awkward pause followed.

"Constance is here," said Mrs. Morton. "She is deeply sorry and repentant for her errors. Let me say that, in my judgment, she has much to excuse her, though nothing can wholly excuse her fault."

A cold perspiration stood upon Mr. Lawson's forehead; his rashness had thrust him into a strange predicament. He made a resolute effort to regain his ground.

"Until this moment, Mrs. Morton, I had no idea that it was you who had taken the pains to shelter the young lady who was once my daughter. I failed to recognize your handwriting in the note you sent me. I came to this village, in the memory of old times, to see you, and upon no other errand."

"Now that you have come," said Mrs. Morton, quietly, overlooking the last part of this speech, "you will at least see her?"

"I cannot," said Mr. Lawson, with a shudder. "She has brought her mother's head to the grave, and inflicted an irreparable disgrace upon me. No child was ever more tenderly cared for; she knew no wish ungratified."

Mrs. Morton sighed; but she forbore to remind the unhappy man of a neglected childhood, and unguarded girlhood.

He was right in saying that every luxury had been heaped upon his ungrateful daughter: better for her if she had known a less downy path.

"You say that she is here," resumed Mr. Lawson, voluntarily continuing this painful subject; "allow me to ask under what circumstances?"

"She was brought to us in one of the wildest storms of last winter," said Mrs. Morton, her voice sinking to the level of a whisper; "she had wandered away from the railway station, and was found insensible in the snow, almost within sight of our door."

Mr. Lawson bent down his eyes with a gloomy frown.

What singular accident had guided her to this spot of all others?

"I will provide for her wants," he said, coming out of his reflections. "She shall receive, through your hands, if you will permit me, a sufficient provision for her future; but I cannot again see her, hardly forgive her. Does she know that she has broken her mother's heart?"

"No," said Mrs. Morton, turning away her face. "I pray that God will mercifully keep that knowledge from her."

Mr. Lawson sat silent; his thoughts turned moodily upon the subject with which they had been filled an hour ago. The choice of his youth was before him; both found themselves again free; he had the power to re-open the past, but the words seemed to die upon his lips.

It might be, setting aside the awkward discovery he had just made, in itself a sufficient reason, that Mrs. Morton's presence recalled with a vividness which he had never felt before his shameful part in the past. He would write to her.

He got up to go, with that thought. She went with him to the door, and said a calm good-evening upon the threshold.

He took her hand by an involuntary impulse, as he had taken it, on that night in the long ago; but now the cool pulses gave back no answering throb as it slipped lightly from his hold.

Well, he owed her something; it was natural her pride, not to speak of a deeper feeling, should hoard up the past.

CHAPTER VI.

In his chamber that night, by the light of a solitary candle, Mr. Lawson sat down to write the letter whose answer he hoped would bring back something of the lost joy and freshness of his youth.

It was strange how the cold, matter-of-fact man of business warmed as his pen glided along under the impulse of a real feeling.

"CONSTANCE.—It will seem strange to you that I should say I once loved you, and that I have loved you all my life; but looking into my heart, I see that it is so. When I left here long ago, I left in the hope of winning a competence, which would enable me to win and marry the little playmate of my school-days. Circumstances went against me; the road to wealth was longer and harder than I could have believed; I grew weary and discouraged. By-and-by I felt compelled to give up the dream, but the love remained, though the dream went. Upon my marriage day I had only respect and a cold appreciation to return for the love of the woman who gave me her hand. My life has been prosperous beyond the common lot, but I cannot say that it has been a happy one. I have absorbed myself in my business, and given to it all my thoughts. In my first days of widowhood, my heart went out to you; I found myself suddenly a lonely and childless man, with no near friend or kin in the world. I have come here at last to seek you, trembling with the fear of finding you dead, or the wife of some more fortunate man than myself. Circumstances—or may I not at this moment say the mysterious providences—have made us both free. I dare to hope that you will allow me to endow you to revive the past, to prove to you at this late day how sincerely I have always honoured and loved you. May I hope for an immediate reply?—that you will allow me to see you to-morrow?"

"She will not refuse me," thought Mr. Lawson, with a comfortable recollection of his wealth, as he folded the letter. "Woman's memories are strong, and Constance is one with whom impressions never readily die out."

The answer did come back on the morrow, in little more than an hour after the note had reached Mrs. Morton's hand; the messenger, indeed, by Mr. Lawson's direction, had waited for the reply.

"MY DEAR FRIEND.—Such I will call you from the recollections of our old intimacy, and from my sincere interest in your welfare. Your letter has given me both pain and surprise. The past, of which you speak, has gone from us both; no care of ours could now revive it. I do not deny that I once returned the sentiments with which I had reason to believe you regarded me; but they died their natural death under the convincing proof which you gave me of your indifference. I do not speak from resentment, but plainly and clearly, when I say that I do not think we could be happy together. You have changed under the influence of your daily life, more perhaps in mind than in outward appearance; you are no longer the frank, kindly boy, of warm impulses; but the cool, calculating man, whose heart is bound up in the cares and pursuits of wealth. As I saw you last night, as I read this new character in the lines of your face, in your voice, in your stern rejection of your unfortunate child, I felt a pang of regret that we had met again, that I should look upon the James Lawson I had once known as almost another man. I repeat, we should not be happy together. There are scores of ladies who would be proud to marry you, and who would be an honour to your wealth and position, very unlike the simple country woman, who is content and happy in the humble lot in which providence has placed her."

The letter dropped from Mr. Lawson's hand; his disappointment was keen and bitter.

"I was so sure of acceptance!" he thought.

He took it up again. There was no compromise in those clear, cool lines.

"It is useless to try again," he thought; "she has made her decision."

The next up train bore him away from the scene of his disappointments to the lonely life which was to close around his future years.

Was Constance right? She thought that she was; a life grown, in the welding process of years, so hard and cold, could never have blessed hers, which was still open, as in youth, to all kindly amenities and charities. He could never have worthily loved her, she also reasoned, to desert her; and this romantic dream, the one shining spot in his life, had been kept alive only by a train of circumstances.

Whether she chose wisely or ill, her declining days were certainly peaceful ones, and brightened by the steady, filial love of the poor young girl whom her compassion had saved from a fearful death in the winter's snows, and raised up to a new life.

M. R.

DISCOVERY IN WORLHAM CHURCH, BASINGSTOKE.—This church is in course of restoration, under the superintendence of Mr. D. Brandon. A curious discovery has been made in the floor of the church of a stone monument, like a coffin, containing the figure of a lady, apparently an abbess of the fourteenth century, carved, with her hands crossed one over the other, and holding what appears to be a rosary, the ribbon of which passes round her neck. Her dress fastened with a round brooch, which has a cross carved in the centre. The lower part of the coffin is closed, and a cross or crozier, 3 feet long, is cut out upon it. The length of the whole stone is 6 feet 5½ inches; the width at the head is 1 foot 9½ inches, and at the feet 1 foot 5 inches.

BRIGANDAGE IN GREECE.

BRIGANDAGE is looking up in Greece. The King of the Mountains has just been able to add handsomely to the balance at his banker's. Many a needy functionary, perhaps even a deputy hero and there, must wish they had his luck.

Three English gentlemen have been neatly caught, and £1,000 a piece extracted from them. This would be a handsome prize in Italy; in Greece, where money goes still further, it is magnificent. As the love of adventure and the veneration for classical antiquity bring wealthy Englishmen to the land of lost gods and godlike men, the calling of the klept promises to take a leading position in the industry of the country.

It appears that Lord John Hervey, the Hon. Mr. Strutt, a son of Lord Belper, and Mr. Coore were travelling in the province of Livadia, and were captured about ten miles from Dragomeston, on the west coast. Mr. Coore was detained as hostage, and the other two gentlemen sent on to Patras.

After some time spent in communicating with Athens and negotiating with the brigands, it was agreed that matters should be settled by each of the gentlemen paying £1,000, and this has been done. A telegram has been received at the Foreign Office stating that all three are now safe and well; but that, as might be expected, there is not the slightest chance that the Greek government will repay the money.

This is the state of Greece after nearly forty years of freedom, and after two sovereigns and an endless succession of ministers have devoted their various degrees of ability and patriotism to the country. A generation has passed away since the young Otto and his attendant Bavarians were despatched to govern the Greeks, among the warnings of a few, but the enthusiastic congratulations of the world at large.

At various periods during his reign there was reason to hope that a better time was coming. Education was extended, the enterprise of the people covered the Mediterranean with their little vessels, faction for a time went to sleep, the cultivation of the country improved, and men might fairly think that the faults engendered by ages of servitude and semi-barbarism were passing away. But ill-luck seems to attend the little kingdom. It has undoubtedly made progress, but not so much as it ought to have made if the advance of other European States be regarded.

The choice of King George might fairly be looked upon as a new era. . . . Brigands infest the neighbourhood of Athens; and only a few months since some inhabitants of the city were seized at a short ride from their homes. What wonder, then, that in so remote a district as that in which these Englishmen were travelling there should be no security for life? But yet it is fair that we should call upon the Greek Government to use all its efforts to root out these ruffians.

Brigandage in the Neapolitan territory is fed by political disaffection, and the evil, though enormous, is combated resolutely, and to a great extent successfully, by the power of the State. In Greece there is no such political difficulty. The robbers rob simply because they are too lazy and ferocious to work. There is, we believe, no sympathy with them on the part of any section of the people, and everybody would be glad to see them extirpated, and the country made safe for the traveller.

The real cause of the evil is the apathy of the Government, which takes no measures to curb the lawless habits of men who are often robbers by hereditary profession. Greece has a sufficient army, and, with a small territory and perfect peace within its borders, it might well take in-hand the extirpation of brigandage.

It is certainly hard that Englishmen should be seized and held to ransom almost in sight of the islands we have recently given up. We might urge the claims of our travellers to consideration on the ground of national gratitude for the many favours which Greece has received from this country. But it may, perhaps, be wiser to appeal to the national interests of the Greek people, and point out to them

that no land has so much to gain as theirs from encouraging the wealthy and educated travellers of Europe.

The reason why the most interesting country of the Mediterranean is one of the least visited in these days of tourists' enterprise is, because travelling in it must not only be without comfort, but even without safety.

EVA ASHLEY.

CHAPTER XLII.

BESSIE'S STRANGE REVERIES.

HAVING arrived at this decision, Mrs. Ashley sought the library, in which she knew her daughter was to be found.

Bessie was sitting by an open window, in an attitude of listless weariness, and the book she had been trying to read had fallen from her hand. Her eyes had dark circles around them, and the smiling lips had lost all their mirthful meaning. So lost in abstraction was she that Mrs. Ashley came quite close to her before she became aware of her presence.

"My love," she began, in a tone she tried to render cheerful, "I have some good news for you. Do you know that Dr. Mantion has been playing the part of your good genius?"

"By prescribing a nauseous bolus?" asked the young girl, with a gleam of her old archness, as she turned toward the speaker. "Minnie, I am so glad that you have come to me just now, for I believe that I was again falling off into another of those strange fits of unconscious reverie, when your entrance broke the spell that was closing around me. Did you tell Dr. Mantion how singularly I was affected yesterday?"

"I told him that you had fainted—nothing else could have been the matter with you, my dear."

Bessie gravely replied: "It was something far more serious than that, Minny. I must have fallen into a species of catalepsy, for I was conscious that I was still in my own room, though the phantom forms that surrounded me were not those with which I am familiar, except that of my grandfather. The others seemed to make efforts to communicate with me, and I have a dim recollection of what they said. Just as I was recovering from the strange insensibility that numbed my body, grandpa suddenly bent over me and distinctly said—'Tell Minny to—' I understood no more, for in another instant I awoke fully to what was passing around me, and found you trying to restore me to consciousness again."

Mrs. Ashley became deadly pale, and after a moment of silent struggle, she asked:

"And those other forms, Bessie? Can you not remember what they were like, and what they said to you?"

"It was very strange, Minny," the young girl went on, in a dreamy manner. "One of them was a brown-haired man, exactly like the miniature I once saw in your drawer, which you told me was that of your first husband. He seemed about to kiss me, but he only breathed on my cheek as he whispered, 'Be firm, Bessie. Never consent to be made the instrument of consummating a wrong. Tell her that retribution will yet overtake her.' I can make no sense of such a warning as that—nor can I divine who was meant by her. But you are ill, Minny? Good heavens! why could my wild fancies afflict you thus?"

Mrs. Ashley had sunk down upon a chair, pale and unnerved; making a violent effort to gain at least outward composure, she hoarsely asked:

"And the other form, Bessie? Whose likeness did that one wear, and what did it say?"

"It was the mother of Frank. I knew her by the portrait of her which hangs in the library. She knit her black brows together, and angrily spoke to me: 'Impostor! how dare you aspire to wed my son? Refuse him, and restore him to his own, untrammelled by vows which will be a burden and a curse to you both. So you see, Minny dear, the power of the supernatural world is arrayed against the union of Frank and myself, as much as our own inclinations are.'"

Mrs. Ashley regained the power of self-control, and she now quietly asked:

"What effect had these strange visions on your mind, Bessie? At the moment they were passing before you, did you imagine them to be real?"

"I cannot recall what I believed then; but they were so vivid that they now seem to have been very real. But the absurdity of what they said proves them to be false spirits, if they were such at all."

"What had you been reading before you fell into this cataleptic condition, my love?"

"A strange book I found in grandpa's desk. It is a so-called description of the condition of spirits in the spheres into which they pass after leaving this world. It was in my hand when the faintness came over me."

Mrs. Ashley gravely said:

"That accounts for it all. You are too young, and your spirits in much too variable a condition to bear such mental ailment as that. In his last days, the squire took a deep interest in reading those curious dreamings, for they can be nothing more. They certainly cannot be elevated to the dignity of a new revelation, and I regret very much that the book was left where you could find it. I beg that you will look into it no more."

"I shall not desire to do so," replied Bessie, quietly, "for I had just finished reading it when you came in. But we are forgetting the good news of which you announced Dr. Mantion as the bearer, and I am becoming anxious to hear it."

Mrs. Ashley eagerly turned to another topic, and with a faint smile, she said:

"The doctor insists that you shall be removed from Ashurst for a season; that you shall try the effect of change and amusement to arouse you from the dreamy melancholy into which you are in danger of falling."

Bessie listened with sudden interest, and she quickly asked:

"And what did you say, Minny? You will go with me of course; for drury as Ashurst has lately become to me, I could never think of leaving you here alone."

"We will speak of that some other time, my love," she evasively replied. "It seems that the Welbys are about to make a northern tour, and Kate has expressed a wish to have you become one of the party."

"Oh! that will be charming! Kate is a dear girl, and Rufus will be a most attentive escort. Besides, Mr. and Mrs. Welby are most agreeable companions for young people. If you will go also, we shall have a most delightful time."

Mrs. Ashley, with a piercing glance at the brightening face before her, suddenly asked:

"Do you like young Welby, Bessie? That is, I mean do you find him more agreeable to you than than other young men whom you have met?"

Bessie's laugh, which of late had rarely been heard, rang out merrily.

"Of course I like Rufus, for we have been friends from childhood, and I do not think that we have ever had a single quarrel; but if you mean do I love him the least bit, I can truly answer that such a neat little piece of primness as Rufus Welby will never be anything more to me than a well-dressed and well-bred gentleman. If you think there is danger that I shall care more for him than for Frank, you are much mistaken. If I were compelled to choose between them, I should prefer my cousin to him."

Mrs. Ashley looked satisfied, but she gravely said:

"My darling, if you could only give me this assurance with regard to all others with whom you may come in contact during your absence from Ashurst, I should be far better satisfied to see you go. For one situated as you are, you are about to pass through a most dangerous ordeal, Bessie."

The fair face of the girl clouded, and she passionately said:

"Minny, I wish I had never been born to wealth—or that it had not been bequeathed to me on such cruel terms. My grandfather could scarcely have been in his sober senses when he bound Frank and myself to make ourselves miserable, or forfeit that portion of his estate which the law would have given to us."

Mrs. Ashley impressively replied to this outbreak by saying:

"The law would give you nothing. If there were no will, Leon Ashley could claim your portion, and if he did not run through it before his death, divide it among all his children."

"Well, Minny, even that would be better for me than to be forced on a man who really cares very little for me; and for whom I only have a strong sisterly regard. If you persist in pressing this distasteful marriage upon me, I tell you that I shall perish slowly in your sight. But I have one hope left. Frank will himself recede from the contract; in his letters he is so enthusiastic in his descriptions of my sister Evelyn, that I am sure he has fallen in love with her."

At this unwelcome suggestion Mrs. Ashley again changed colour, but she firmly said:

"I must warn you, Bessie, that the fancied inconstancy of Frank will not release you from the necessity of obeying your grandfather's will. Mr. Ashley will never give him the hand of his younger daughter, and I am very certain that he will insist on the fulfilment of the contract by which you and Frank are in honour bound."

"Honour!" repeated Bessie, indignantly. "Will there be honour in perjurying ourselves before high heaven for the sake of money? I would far rather earn my own bread than enter into such wearing bonds as those would be. Minny, please don't talk to

me any more about it. If Fate insists that I shall eventually become Frank's wife, leave me at least some fancied loophole of escape, that I may not die of despair outright. Shall we go north this summer? That is now the question to be settled."

Mrs. Ashley saw that she would bear no more at that time, and she replied to her last words in her softest and most caressing tones:

"You will go, darling, but I must remain here."

"Oh, Minny, why do you say that? I am sure half the pleasure of my trip will be destroyed if you are not my companion. Why can you not go?"

"Because I have led a quiet life so long that I should not enjoy a change in my habits, Bessie, even if it were proper for me to go out in the world so soon after the death of my kind, good husband. With you it is different. You will enjoy and be benefited by the change, which the doctor insists is absolutely necessary for the preservation of your health. If I did not see for myself that he speaks the truth, I would never consent to be separated from you at this time."

After a few moments' thought, Bessie said:

"It is selfish in me to accept your permission to leave you, but I yearn to get away from this place with a feeling of sick weariness which is indescribable; I never dreamed that I could suffer so much from staying in a place where I have hitherto been so happy. But it is so, Minny, ungrateful as it seems, and although you refuse to go with me, my heart bounds at the thought of seeing that world of which I have hitherto only dreamed."

Mrs. Ashley mournfully replied:

"I see plainly how it is, Bessie. You are glad to wing your way from your home nest into that unknown region whose delusive attractions beckon you on, free from the guiding hand which has hitherto carried you safely on through life. It is the natural course of things, I suppose, but still it wounds the heart which has learned to cling to you as its dearest earthly stay."

Bessie arose in great agitation, and throwing herself in Mrs. Ashley's arms, she tenderly said:

"No motherless child ever before had such love lavished on her as you have given to me, Minny, and I return it with all my heart. But you worry me so about Frank, that to tell you the whole truth, I am glad to escape from Ashurst, and all thought or mention of him, for a season at least."

"You must promise me one thing before you go," whispered Mrs. Ashley. "Pledge your word to me to form no other tie, to close your heart against the insidious voice of love, at least till your return here, till your father has decided your fate. Oh! Bessie, you do not know how much is dependent on your conduct for the next few months!"

Bessie extricated herself from her clasping arms, and with some fire replied:

"I fully understand that the happiness of my whole future life is dependent on my willingness to accept respectable poverty, or wealth shamefully gained. But as far as I can, I give you the promise you ask. I will not entangle myself with another lover while the shadow of a tie binds me to my cousin, though I cannot say that I may not find some one I should infinitely prefer to Frank, if I am compelled to marry."

"I must try and satisfy myself with that," said Mrs. Ashley, kissing her. "Certain that I may confide in your honour, I shall part from you with a heart less apprehensive for your future than it has lately been. To-morrow we will go over to the Oaks, and make such arrangements with Mrs. Welby as may be necessary."

"Oh, thank you, Minny! You are the best and kindest of creatures. But it is true that I need this change, and I promise to write you an account of everything I see; and you can invite some one to stay with you while I am gone."

"No one could fill your place, my love; and with books, my flowers, and my daily walks, I can manage to pass the time away. Do not let any thought of me weigh on your mind, but gain as much enjoyment as possible from your trip. I shall be happy in thinking that you are regaining your health and spirits, and your letters will brighten me up nearly as much as your presence."

Bessie knew better than this—she knew very well that nothing could be to her devoted Minny what her daily presence was; but she only pressed her hand tenderly, with the assurance that the letters at least, should never fail to make their appearance every few days.

CHAPTER XLIII.

MRS. ASHLEY AT THE OAKS.

On the following day, the visit to The Oaks was made; it was a fine old place, surrounded by the noble trees from which it took its name.

Mr. Welby was wealthy, and lived with open house

and open hand, welcoming even the chance wayfarer with that cordial hospitality which gives from its abundance as freely as it is given.

Both Mr. Welby and his wife were good-natured people, ready to promote the enjoyment of others, and never better pleased than when their capacious mansion was filled with guests.

The house was the centre of gaiety in the neighbourhood, and a large family of sons and daughters successively appearing on the stage of life, kept up a round of festivities of which the elders seemed to grow weary no more than the youngest guest they received.

Luckily for Mr. Welby, his fortune was sufficient to stand the drain thus constantly made upon it, for his management was good and his income large.

Two sons and as many daughters were already married, and settled near their parents; another son was grown up, and the third daughter was to make her debut in society this summer; while two younger girls were to remain at home under the care of their governess.

Mrs. Welby, a light-haired woman, with a face of rosy contentment, received Mrs. Ashley with punctilious politeness, and Bessie with affection. Her daughter presently appeared—a small, fair-haired girl, with blue eyes and flaxen hair, evidently a youthful copy of her mamma.

Kate greeted Mrs. Ashley with the affectionate interest that lady rarely failed to inspire in those who had seen much of her; and Miss Welby had been a frequent guest at Ashurst.

She impulsively said:

"Oh, my dear Mrs. Ashley, I do hope that you have come over to confirm the good report Dr. Manton brought us yesterday evening. He said he had been persuading you to let Bessie go north with us, and if you would only second him, he thought you might be induced to give her up to us for a little while."

Dr. Manton had evidently displayed more tact than Mrs. Ashley had given him credit for in removing from herself the disagreeable necessity of asking as a favour that which Kate Welby now implored as a boon.

Before she could reply to her, Mrs. Welby herself spoke:

"What Kate says is quite true, Mrs. Ashley. It will add very much not only to her pleasure, but to that of our whole party to have dear Bessie as our travelling companion in the trip we contemplate making. I have remarked the change in her of late, but if you will trust her to our care, I think we can promise to return her to you quite restored to her former self."

Bessie gave her a grateful look, and after a few whispered words with Kate, the two left the room, to go to the apartment of the young lady, and discuss their plans in private.

Mrs. Ashley hastened to reply to her hostess:

"I scarcely know how to thank you, Mrs. Welby, for your kindness in offering to burden yourself with a young girl who may prove something of a charge to you. Bessie is very tractable, but she is giddy and impulsive, and I own to you that I am very anxious as to what may happen while she is away from me. The trip may benefit her health, but I fear it will sadly change her mind."

Mrs. Welby laughed good-humouredly as she replied:

"You must expect that she will have her head a little turned; a young lady of her attractions must, of course, receive much attention, and listen to a great deal of flattery; but Bessie has sense enough to reject the froth, and settle down on what will promise some solid comfort."

"I hope so, Mrs. Welby; but I beg that you will not permit Bessie to be spoken of, or introduced into society as an heiress. Unless she marries Frank Wentworth she loses everything, except three hundred a year."

Mrs. Welby looked astonished, for the lawyer had been discreet, and the provisions of Squire Ashley's will had not become generally known; and intimate as the two girls were, Bessie had never breathed in the ears of her friend Kate a syllable of the distasteful compact by which she was bound.

Mrs. Welby merely said:

"Then I may look on my young friend as betrothed to her cousin? Of course, with this confidence bestowed on me, I shall feel bound to look after her more carefully, Mrs. Ashley. I remember now, that there was some talk in the neighbourhood about a wedding at Ashurst before Mr. Wentworth left, but as no intimation came to us from either party, that such an event was likely to take place, I concluded there could be nothing in the report."

"I may tell you in confidence, Mrs. Welby, that there would have been one, if Bessie had not been suddenly attacked with illness. In fact, the minister was in the house to unite them; but the poor child

was so deeply grieved by her grandfather's death that she became too ill to give Frank the assurance that he would find her as he left her—certainly his own."

"I had heard something of that too," admitted prudent Mrs. Welby, "but the impression I received was, that Bessie was unwilling to ratify the contract, and Mr. Wentworth refused to insist on it when he found how unhappy it made her. Perhaps the change in the poor child's spirits may be traced to her dread of Frank's return."

Mrs. Ashley rapidly changed colour as she listened, but she readily replied:

"I do not believe that Bessie has the slightest dread of such a thing. She and Frank are the best of friends, and they are really very fond of each other. The unwillingness she betrayed was, in my opinion, mere girlish caprice, arising from her ignorance of life. A few months hence she will understand herself better, and yield gracefully to the destiny which has been laid out for her."

Mrs. Welby looked grave, but she said nothing in reply, and Mrs. Ashley went on with nervous haste:

"During Bessie's absence with you, she will have opportunities of learning the true value of wealth; she will begin to comprehend the *prestige* it gives; and I am sure when she once understands how important an element of happiness money is, she will not consent to relinquish her grandfather's estate because she has not formed a romantic attachment for her destined bridegroom. If she goes with you, my dear Mrs. Welby, I hope that you will constantly keep in mind her peculiar position, and guard her as much as possible from those silly, sentimental flirtations to which young girls are so prone. I assure you, that without absolute ruin to Bessie's prospects, there is no escape for her from the marriage Squire Ashley so ardently desired."

Struck by the earnestness with which she spoke, Mrs. Welby said:

"I will do my best to guard her from the dangers you dread for her, Mrs. Ashley, and I must say that the tender maternal interest you share for this motherless girl, is highly creditable to you."

The listener shrank a little, but she replied, with perfect calmness:

"I have reared her from infancy; she has been as my own, for she took the place of the infant that was removed from me; and of course I love her very dearly. Any misfortune happening to Bessie, would affect me as nearly as it would herself. If I had spirits to go into the world again, I would never permit her to leave me; but, I feel that, for me, it is impossible to forsake the shades in which I have enjoyed so many years of quiet happiness, so soon after the death of him who conferred it on me."

"I understand your reluctance, Mrs. Ashley, and respect it. You may feel assured that I will watch over Bessie as if she were my own daughter, and I will endeavour to save her from every temptation to swerve from her allegiance to Frank. I thank you for the confidence you have reposed in me, and I will prove to you that I deserve it."

"We understand each other now, and I feel better satisfied to send Bessie away with you. When do you think of leaving?"

"In four days from this time. It is short notice for Bessie, but we shall stop a week in London, and she can have her wardrobe supplied there."

"Of course; that will be the best arrangement. She will only need a travelling-dress made here, and that can soon be done."

"I cannot tell you how happy I am that you have consented to let the dear girl accompany us, and here comes Mr. Welby to tell you the same. Mrs. Ashley, my dear, has come over to see about Bessie—and we have arranged that she is to go with us."

"Upon my word, that is good news, indeed," said Mr. Welby, who was more robust, and more good-natured in appearance than his wife. "We shall be the gainers by that arrangement, and you could not have come on a more agreeable errand, Mrs. Ashley."

"I am glad to see that Bessie is so great a favourite with you all, and I assure you that there are few with whom I should be so willing to trust her as yourself and Mrs. Welby. You know how to deal with young people—and the marriages your own daughters have made were so prudent that I can have no misgivings as to my darling, especially as I have fully explained her position to your wife."

He gravely replied:

"If my children have made good matches, the credit is entirely due to themselves, Mrs. Ashley, for we never sought to influence them in any way. I am sure it is wrong to do so. My mother and I had a nice time of it before our marriage with the senseless turmoil made by her family, because she was much richer than I was, and we have been as happy together as two turtle doves. I have heard something about Bessie's affairs, and I am sorry that my old friend should have bound those two poor children in the way he did."



[BESSIE'S STRANGE REVERIE.]

Mrs. Ashley felt extremely uncomfortable, and she hastened to say:

"He thought he was doing the best for them, Mr. Welby. He had watched them growing up with the fondest affection for each other, and he thought the safest way to secure Bessie's future fate from the grasp of her father was to make sure of her union with Frank before Mr. Ashley could return to his native land."

For once in her life, the speaker was thrown so completely off her guard that the reference to Leon Ashley escaped her lips unconsciously, and she was not aware of what she had said till the expression of astonishment on the two faces before her warned her of her error.

She sank back faint and sick for a few moments, but recovered as she heard Mr. Welby say:

"Leon Ashley alive! Leon Ashley coming from the Continent! It seems incredible, when the world around us has so long believed him dead. It will be well indeed to save this poor child from his authority."

"That is what I most earnestly wish; but you can understand my feelings on the point without any more words concerning them. I have been very thoughtless to speak as I did just now, but it is the truth. You know why Mr. Ashley was compelled to expatriate himself, so we will let that part of the story lie in oblivion. A letter came from Frank only a few days ago, in which he says that his uncle declares he will come back to Ashurst so soon as he has recovered from a severe attack of illness from which he has been suffering. I cannot tell you how deeply I regret his threatened appearance here on Bessie's account. From all accounts of Mr. Ashley, he is a most violent and unreasonable man, and his want of principle was so clearly shown in his youth, that I can have no faith in him."

"Will he not be afraid to venture here?" asked Mr. Welby. "He might be arrested for the fatal termination of his duel with that poor young Arden."

"He insists that he did not kill him; and, even if he had done so, that it would be impossible, after so long a time had elapsed, to prove it against him."

"He is right," said Mr. Welby. "I remember the inquest, and the verdict was death by drowning. As the dead man's sister subsequently eloped with Ashley, she, of course, believed him innocent of her brother's blood. Am I not right, Mrs. Ashley, in supposing that the Larne with whom Miss Arden went off to Paris, after what was supposed to be a very brief acquaintance, was no other than the son of Squire Ashley?"

"You are quite right. He and Miss Arden were again united, and she accompanied him in his exile from his native land. You are aware that she is dead long since, but she left a daughter who is the heiress of Ashurst; and by his last wife Mr. Ashley has a son who is yet a boy."

"And he will bring them all back with him. Bless my soul! it seems like a wild romance. If the young heiress of Arden will inaugurate the same style of hospitality which prevailed there in earlier days, it will be a fine thing for the young people in the neighbourhood."

"I think she will have no control there till she is of age; her mother left her income to her husband till her child is twenty-one, and Evelyn Ashley is but seventeen. Her father has expressed his intention of taking up his abode at Arden Place when he comes hither. I am very thankful that he will leave me in peace where I have so long dwelt."

"If I remember Leon Ashley aright, you cannot be too thankful for that, madam; and I can quite understand your anxiety on Bessie's account. I hope she will yet see with your eyes, and find happiness in the union her grandfather desired her to make."

At that moment a dapper little figure, dressed in the extreme of fashion, and carrying a slender cane in his hand, came in. His features were regular as those of a girl, and his blonde hair hung in soft waves around a brow as smooth and lineless as his sister's. Mrs. Ashley almost smiled as she thought how lately she had questioned Bessie as to the probability of her falling in love with this miniature specimen of humanity.

Rufus Welby greeted Mrs. Ashley with great embarrassment, and then said:

"I have just seen the girls, Mrs. Ashley, and I have come to thank you for permitting Bessie to accompany us on our trip. It will be rendered doubly delightful by her presence, and I am only sorry that you too are not to be with us. I shall have a fine time with two such pretty girls as Kate and Miss Ashley to escort everywhere."

With her sweetest smile, Mrs. Ashley replied:

"I make over Bessie to you, Mr. Welby. Of course you will find other dearer for your sister, but it is my wish that you shall constitute yourself Miss Ashley's constant attendant."

Young Welby bowed low, and began to express his acknowledgments for such unexpected favour, when his mother cut him short by saying:

"Don't flatter yourself, my darling, that Mrs. Ashley wishes you to make an impression on the heart of our young friend. She only thinks you are

a safe attendant for our pretty betrothed, and you are too much Frank Wentworth's friend to try and rival him in his absence."

Rufus elevated his eyebrows and shrugged his shoulders at this explanation, but he gracefully said:

"I am flattered, at any rate, Mrs. Ashley, that you should have so much confidence in me, and I mean to do my best to deserve it. But girls will flirt a little, and I can't engage to make Bessie hate me by interfering too much with her amusements."

"Oh, I can leave that to your own discretion. You will only step in, Mr. Rufus, when things begin to wear a serious aspect, and save her from the consequences of her own imprudence. I have spoken very freely on this subject with your father and mother, and they understand my motives for guarding Bessie from every chance of breaking the truth. It is so important to her interest—and I also believe to her happiness—to fulfil."

"It cannot be otherwise, for Frank is a noble fellow, and if he loves Bessie, I can understand your anxiety about the temptations to which she may be exposed while on this visit. She will be much admired, of course, for she is singularly handsome."

"It is not that I care to guard her against, only to prevent her from admiring any other one too much in her turn. Bessie is romantic, and she thinks it too humdrum to accept the happiness which has been thrown at her feet. Like many other young girls, she believes that difficulties must be overcome to render a marriage blissfully happy. She will get over such notions when she gains a little more experience, and all that is necessary now is to guard her till her judgment has ripened a little."

Rufus laughed gleefully, and said:

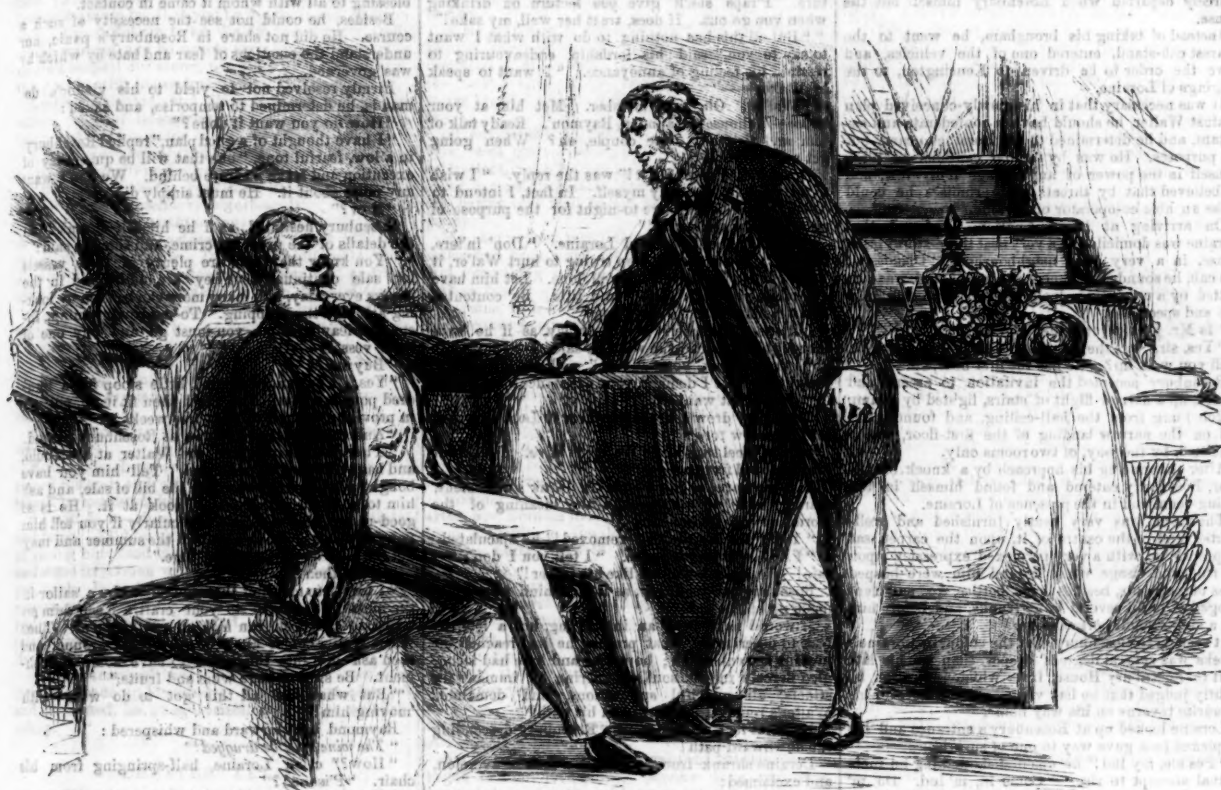
"I am really highly flattered, Mrs. Ashley, that you should appoint me the guardian of this pretty piece of humanity. I cannot boast of much experience, but with me and pa to back me, I dare say I shall come out with credit to myself—that is, if Bessie is not provoked into cutting my acquaintance."

At that moment the bell for luncheon sounded, the girls came in together, and Mr. Welby, with old-fashioned politeness, offered his arm to Mrs. Ashley to conduct her into the next room.

The party gathered around a daintily-spread table, and gaily discussed plans and made arrangements for the proposed trip to Scotland.

They at length separated, with a promise from Mrs. Ashley to take Bessie to the station on the following Tuesday in time to join her friends before they set out.

(To be continued.)



[WALTER DRUGGED AND ENTRAPPED.]

BELLE OF THE SEASON.

By W. E. CHADWICK.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Let no man trust the first false step
Of guilt; it hangs upon a precipice.
Whose steep descent in last perdition ends.

AFTER the departure of Lorraine, Rosebury returned to his mother's guests, as has been recorded. He found them engaged in cheerful conversation, which was not broken off at his entrance; but it was plain that his presence threw a restraint over the little party. Walter could not forget or excuse Raymond's recent insult to her ladyship, and Lady Rosebury and the Lady Geraldine felt a sentiment of indignation against his *soi-disant* lordship for his patronizing manner towards the young artist.

Rosebury, however, pretended not to notice their coldness, and joined in the conversation occasionally, although the notice he received was scarcely satisfactory. He was strongly tempted to make further allusions to the visit of Colte Lorraine, and make some patronizing promises to Walter, but he wisely refrained from yielding to the temptation. He feared lest he might say too much, and in some way betray his own secret relationship to his late visitor.

A consciousness of his secret identity had grown to be ever present with Rosebury, and he had grown to weigh every word and look of her ladyship, with the fear of detecting in her some latent suspicion of the truth. He feared to leave her alone with the artist, lest their conversation should turn upon Walter's resemblance to the late Lord Rosebury, or some natural instinct should reveal to her ladyship that Walter was her own son.

Truly, for him the path of wrong-doing was full of retributive thorns.

The character of his countenance had changed lately. His former careless sort of expression had vanished. His glances had become full of suspicion, and his manner was restless and anxious, as if his life were one of continual watchfulness and apprehension.

Lady Rosebury could not but remark the contrast between the two young men as they sat before her, and she sighed involuntarily as she recognized for the hundredth time the great superiority of Walter.

It was not that he was handsomer—although his

singular beauty appealed strongly to a heart like Lady Rosebury's, so full of love for the beautiful, but because a manly soul looked from his clear eyes—because his smile was frank and honest, and perhaps, also, because he resembled his late lordship so strongly.

Her ladyship reproached herself in her own soul for loving Walter better than Raymond, but she knew that she had done her duty towards her son throughout his life. She had tried to love him, but there was some secret barrier between them which she had always felt, but never been able to understand.

He had shrunk from her caresses in his boyhood, his nature lacking sufficient delicacy or refinement to appreciate such tender testimonies of a mother's love, or such involuntary outpourings of a mother's heart, and the tide which he was at such pains to turn from himself reverted towards Walter, the son of her ladyship's gardener.

It was a beautiful illustration of the laws of compensation, that while Walter was deprived of his rightful rank and position in the world, he held his rightful place in his mother's heart.

Rosebury, with an affectation of gaiety, continued to join in the general conversation, while his eyes roved from one to another of the members of the little group. He noticed how proudly the Lady Geraldine wore her betrothal ring, and he saw that any future attempts to estrange the young couple might only bring them more closely together. And yet he was more than ever resolved to prevent their ultimate marriage.

He had overheard Lady Rosebury declare that she should leave her own fortune entirely to Walter, and he felt he could not lose so large a part of the price for which he had sold his honour and integrity. He was determined that not a penny of her wealth should go to any one besides himself. But if the artist were to marry the Lady Geraldine, he would probably receive a large sum from Lady Rosebury as a wedding present. That was one reason for preventing the proposed marriage.

Another and equally powerful reason was Rosebury's love for the charming belle. The fire of his passion had received new fuel from the fact that she seemed unattainable. That she did not love him, that she had rejected him and preferred another, gave her an additional value in his eyes, and he was more than ever determined to win her. He hoped to marry her, and in so doing to completely crush the dreaded Walter, and drive him in despair from his native country.

He felt that then, and not till then, should he be perfectly safe.

Walter once gone, he fancied he could inspire Geraldine with resignation to her lot, and even prevent Lady Rosebury from making a will in the artist's favour.

But how were these—to him—desirable ends to be brought about?

He turned the subject over and over in his mind, and finally decided upon a plan of action that seemed to him feasible, although it consisted in getting rid of Walter immediately, and wedding the Lady Geraldine in his absence.

The lovers remained to dinner, and soon after the maiden proposed to take her departure.

"You will remember, my dear," said Lady Rosebury, "that you can meet Walter here at any time without impropriety. I regard you both as my children, and delight in nothing more than to make you happy. I think it will be quite right for you to evade your uncle's injustice by meeting Walter here openly and often. There need be nothing clandestine about it."

These remarks were made in the boudoir to the lovers before the return of Lord Rosebury from the table, where he lingered over his wine, and both warmly thanked her ladyship for her interest in their behalf.

Walter offered his services as escort to Geraldine, as a matter of course, and the maiden hastened to attire herself in bonnet and mantle for the street. She was scarcely ready, when Rosebury entered the apartment.

"Going so soon, Lady Geraldine?" he said, in a tone of disappointment. "I hoped you would brighten our evening by remaining with us."

Geraldine replied by thanking him.

Rosebury noticed that Walter had prepared to accompany his betrothed, and continued:

"Allow me to escort you home, Lady Geraldine, if you prefer to walk."

"Mr. Lorraine will accompany me, thank you," was the gentle reply.

"I am quite sure that the earl would prefer that I should go with you," persisted Rosebury.

"I consult my own preferences, your lordship, and not the earl's," returned the maiden, with spirit.

Rosebury bit his lip and said no more on the subject, but he inwardly resolved that the Lady Geraldine should suffer for his present humiliation when she became his wife.

Walter and his betrothed soon took an affectionate leave of Lady Rosebury, after accepting an invitation

to spend the next evening with her, and they had scarcely departed when Rosenbury himself left the house.

Instead of taking his brougham, he went to the nearest cab-stand, entered one of the vehicles, and gave the order to be driven to Kensington, to the lodgings of Lorraine.

It was necessary that in his newly-concoived plan against Walter, he should have a confederate and assistant, and he determined to use Lorraine to carry out his purposes. He was by far too cautious to place himself in the power of any strange individual, and he believed that by threats and promises he could make an able co-operator of Lorraine.

On arriving at his destination, he found that Lorraine was domiciled in a very neat three-storey brick house, in a very good neighbourhood. Dismissing the cab, he sounded the knocker himself, and was admitted by a respectable-looking elderly woman in a cap and spectacles.

"Is Mr. Lorraine at home?" he asked.
"Yes, sir," was the reply. "He has just come in. Will you walk up? He has the first floor, sir."

Rosenbury accepted the invitation to ascend and passed up a narrow flight of stairs, lighted by a lamp which hung from the hall-ceiling, and found himself on the narrow landing of the first-floor, which consisted, by the way, of two rooms only.

After announcing his approach by a knock on the door, Rosenbury entered and found himself in the sitting-room and in the presence of Lorraine.

The room was very neatly furnished and well-lighted, and in the centre of it, upon the carpet, sat its proprietor, with a very perplexed expression upon his rubicund visage, while around him were heaped piles of garments, besides boots, bottles, &c., sufficient altogether to fill several large trunks, and before him lay a single small portmanteau.

It seemed to Rosenbury that the colour in Lorraine's cheeks was several degrees deeper than on his late visit to Rosenbury House, from which indication he rightly judged that he had visited one or more of his favourite taverns on his way home.

Lorraine looked up at Rosenbury's entrance and his perplexed look gave way to one of surprise.

"Possible, my lad!" he ejaculated, making an ineffectual attempt to rise. "Come in, my lad. Do my honour."

Rosenbury closed the door behind him and sat down near his host, whereupon the latter's manner changed, and he said, familiarly:

"Un'stand, Raymon', spoke for 'fect, while door's open. 'Scuse gettin' up. Such bother pack. Can't see how all those things going into 't'is!"

He looked about him helplessly, as well he might, considering the impossible nature of the task he had undertaken, and then he turned towards his visitor, as if he expected him to come to his relief.

"Too much clothes for 't'is, or too little 't'is for clothes," he remarked, by way of eliciting aid. "You're a keen fella, Raymon'—a'pose you pack 'em, eh?"

Rosenbury hastily declined the task, adding:

"Stay. Leave your packing. I have something to say to you that will change your plans somewhat."

"Don't say!" ejaculated Lorraine, struggling to his feet and gaining a chair. "Talk 'way!"

"Do you know what you are about?" demanded Rosenbury. "I can't talk with a tipsy man—"

"Tipsy!" interrupted Lorraine. "Scorn imputation. Sober as you are. Jest try me. Want see me walk seam in carpet?"

Rosenbury declined submitting him to this test, and remarked, impatiently:

"You know you've been drinking—"

"Well, what if I have? Free country. 'Nough left for you, if that's what you've riled at! Yes, stepped into tavern for las' drop 'fore leavin' familiar scenes, 'deared by thoutan' 'sociations! 'Taint light thing set out on p'tracted journey like the tower 'fore me!"

Lorraine seemed affected at his own remarks, but Rosenbury had by this time become sufficiently acquainted with his host's peculiarities to see that he was quite sober enough for the communication he intended to make to him.

"We'll talk of your journey pretty soon," he replied. "At present I desire to talk of Walter!"

"Walter, eh?" returned Lorraine, with a beaming smile. "Walter! Good joke! You call him 'Walter,' when he's real Lud Roseby. Queer worl'. And he says 'ludship' to you!"

Lorraine winked at the lights as if he expected them to share in his sense of the ludicrous.

"Hush!" exclaimed Rosenbury, nervously. "Walls have ears—"

"Not here, though. Landlady perfect gem. 'Spended sorrow losin' me, so paid her keep rooms till return. Umlo fren's, Raymon', but true—true as steel! Leave part clothes with her. On'y think, Raymon', poor creature gave me lecture on drinkin'. Seems she lost husband by drinkin'. I 'spise

drunkards!" he added, reflectively. "Nervous creature. Praps she'll give you lecture on drinking when you go out. If does, treat her well, my sake!"

"But all this has nothing to do with what I want to say to you," said his lordship, endeavouring to restrain his feeling of annoyance. "I want to speak of Walter—"

"Walter! Oh, yes, member. Met him at your house—his house—'s a'noon, Raymon'. Ready talk of him and girl too. Nice couple, eh? When going get married?"

"Never, if I can help it!" was the reply. "I wish to marry the young lady myself. In fact, I intend to do so. I have come here to-night for the purpose of gaining your assistance!"

"My 'assistance!" repeated Lorraine. "Don't in'yere, Raymon'. Sure as you keep trying to hurt Walter, it'll all come out. Better let well 'lone. Let him have girl while you keep money and title. Be contented 'bout robbin' him of everything!"

Lorraine spoke soberly and seriously, as if he were thoroughly in earnest in what he said.

"I do not ask your advice," replied Rosenbury, haughtily, "but I demand your assistance!"

"Well, what want?"

Rosenbury drew his chair nearer to Lorraine's, and said, in a low tone:

"I don't feel safe while Walter is alive. I—I want him removed from my path!"

Lorraine stared at his visitor in blank amazement, scarcely able to comprehend the meaning of the words which he had heard.

"You want Walter kill—removed!" he ejaculated.

"I do!" was the response. "I tell you I don't feel safe! He looks too much like his father!"

Rosenbury spoke firmly, as if his mind were quite made up on the subject.

It would have been an interesting, but a lengthy task to describe by what process he had reached his present determination; how fear and hate had struggled fiercely in his soul, conquering all humane instincts, all merciful suggestions, and demanded Walter's removal for ever from his path!

By what fearful strides was Rosenbury descending the downward path!

Lorraine shrank from him with a look of aversion, and exclaimed:

"Horrible! Horrible! Oh, Raymon', let him 'lone! He is good and innocent—let him 'lone! I never 'spected you'd become a murderer!"

"Hush your whining!" commanded Rosenbury.

"Do you not see that I am ruined if he lives? Lady Rosenbury has declared that she is going to leave him her entire fortune. You have precipitated matters by your visit to me to-day. Do you suppose I can have gardeners visiting me without people becoming suspicious? Do you not suppose that her ladyship will couple my likeness to your wife with your familiar visits, and suspect the truth? If the truth comes out, I am a ruined man. I have no ability to earn my own living. I cannot sink to my original sphere after my club life and aristocratic associations. I cannot bear to drop out of my social position. Luxury is necessary to my existence. And I will marry the Lady Geraldine Summers. You see now where I stand—upon the crust of a burning volcano!"

Lorraine was overwhelmed by this outburst, but ventured to offer a few frightened remonstrances, which he speedily saw would be of no avail.

In truth, Rosenbury was thoroughly alarmed at his position and prospects, and in his present mood would venture upon deeds from which he would have shrunk when in a calmer frame of mind.

"How—how are you going to do it?" at length faltered Lorraine.

"I am not going to do it at all—it is you who will carry out the affair," was the reply.

To Rosenbury's coward soul it seemed that with the execution of the contemplated crime, he shifted the guilt!

"I?" cried Lorraine, with a start. "I won't!"

"Yes, you will! Had it not been for you, there'd have been no need of it! You began the affair years ago—you shall finish it now! You are in my power! If the truth comes out, I shall go free, but you will be transported for life!"

The threat immediately subdued Lorraine, but he responded:

"How can I? I love him like he was my own son! He was good to me—oh, Raymon', you do it!"

"I can't," was the reply. "You will do it, or be transported!"

Lorraine's face became deathly pale and he shuddered. On the one hand was transportation for life, on the other luxury and ease. Bad as he was, there was some good in the soul of the erring man, more humanity than there was in Rosenbury's. He could not bear to turn so basely upon the man he had already so terribly wronged, but who had yet treated him always with filial respect and tenderness. He could not bear to stain his soul with the most terrible of all

crimes, to cut short an innocent life which was a blessing to all with whom it came in contact.

Besides, he could not see the necessity of such a course. He did not share in Rosenbury's panic, nor understand the emotions of fear and hate by which he was governed.

Firmly resolved not to yield to his visitor's demands, he determined to temporise, and asked:

"How do you want it done?"

"I have thought of a good plan," replied Rosenbury, in a low, fearful tone, "one that will be quite easy of execution and leave no trace behind. We don't want any noise about it. He must simply disappear."

"How?"

Rosenbury hesitated, as if he himself shrank from the details of the proposed crime, and then he said:

"You know that there are plenty of little vessels for sale continually. They are advertised in the papers every day, and many more can be seen by looking amongst the shipping. To-morrow morning, instead of leaving town, you must go and buy one of these vessels—"

"Buy one?"

"Yes. You can get a good little sloop for a hundred pounds or so. You must then fit it up, putting in provision enough to last three weeks."

"And then?" asked Lorraine, as Rosenbury paused.

"Then you must go and see Walter at his studio, and have a little talk with him. Tell him you have bought a little craft, show him the bill of sale, and ask him to go down with you to 'look at it. He is so good-natured he will do it, particularly if you tell him you are going cruising about all the summer and may not see him again for a long time."

"What then?"

"I forgot to mention that you must hire a sailor in the morning to attend to your craft. Keep him on board, so that you can sail at any moment. Then when Walter comes aboard, show him around, and then ask him into the cabin to have some refreshment. Be sure to have wine and fruits."

"But what has all this got to do with—moving him?"

Raymond bent forward and whispered:

"The wine must be drugged!"

"How?" cried Lorraine, half-springing from his chair. "Poisoned?"

"No; simply drugged with a narcotic, which you will get beforehand. While he is asleep, you will sail. Before he awakens, bind him and leave him in his berth, telling your seaman that he is ill. Keep him drugged during your voyage."

"But where am I to take him to?"

"You had better go northward," said Rosenbury, thoughtfully. "There are small islands to the north of Scotland, uninhabited save by birds. Take him on one of these, and go back to your vessel without him," he added, significantly.

"But what will sailor think?"

"You must tell him the young gentleman is your invalid son, pretend to think a great deal of him, and after you go back from the island to your vessel, tell the seaman that your son fell off a rock into the sea!"

"But the sailor may want look for him?" suggested Lorraine.

"Let him look, then. Walter must really have fallen into the sea—you understand?"

Lorraine replied in the affirmative.

"And thus," remarked Rosenbury, "my path is left free and unmenaced. I can see the Lady Geraldine and win her too, since Walter will never return. You will be safe, and from the hour of your return shall live in grand style. I will settle a handsome fortune upon you!"

"And if I don't?"

"You know the alternative as well as I do. If you have any natural affection, you will do this for me. If you refuse me, I shall never know another peaceful moment. I shall always be fearing exposure and ruin. You have now the opportunity of fixing your son firmly in the position to which you elevated him. One bold stroke, father, and your fortune as well as mine is secured."

Lorraine appeared thoughtful, as if deliberating upon the matter, and Rosenbury used every means to induce him to yield assent to his infamous scheme. He threatened, bribed, coaxed, appealed to his paternal pride and affection, and was finally gratified by hearing him say:

"It's a terrible thing you want me to do, Raymon', but I'll do it! For your sake, whom I've already sinned so deeply, I'll finish him off! We won't talk any more about way of doing it, for I understand that well enough. Have I got money enough buy the sloop and fixin's?"

"If not, here's more," returned Rosenbury, with a sigh of relief, handing him a bank note.

Lorraine put it in his pocket, and said:

"Shall let you know 'morrow about my craft?"

"No; I wish to hear nothing of you until your re-

turn. I shall hear that Walter has disappeared, and that will assure me that you have progressed favourably. Be careful not to let Walter free for a moment on the passage, and be sure to keep him drugged. He mustn't suspect our secret, nor know that I have anything to do with his seizure."

Loraine assented, and then, emboldened by the calmer tones of Rosenbury, made a last appeal to his mercy. It was in vain.

"Well," he then sighed, "what must be, must be. I only hope you'll never 'gret it, Raymon'."

"Remember, it's for your own safety, as well as mine!" replied Rosenbury, significantly.

They conversed a while longer, and then the visitor arose to take his departure, quite satisfied with the result of his interview. During the latter part of it, Loraine had shown a greater interest in it, and had seemed less fearful of undertaking the dreadful task.

The last injunctions were at length given, and Rosenbury was escorted to the door by Loraine, and as his lordship passed down the street, he thought:

"He will do it! He will do it! The guilt will be his, not mine. And I shall be safe."

With the exultation came a feeling as if he were a murderer.

Endeavouring to shake it off, he hastened homeward.

Meanwhile, Loraine returned to his chamber, resumed his seat, and gave himself up to thought. At length he muttered, half aloud:

"I will do it—since necessary for Raymon's safety and mine. I'll buy sloop, carry Walter off, but 'stead of killing him, land him on one of those little islands, and some fishermen will take him off. Before he can get back, Raymon'll marry the girl, I'll get my money, and all 'll be safe! He needn't know Raymon had anything to do with it, and I can hide from him somewhere. Yes, that's the way to do it. Walter shall live, and Raymon, and I'll be safe!"

Having arranged the affair to his mental satisfaction, and made up his mind to execute it as planned and corrected, he flung himself on a couch and fell asleep.

CHAPTER XXIX.

What wise sharp is found in age or youth,
That can distinguish truth from treachery?
Mirror for Magistrates.

THE next morning Loraine arose at an early hour, fortified his sinking courage with his favourite stimulant, and then made a collection of the daily papers, not only for that particular morning, but for the past week. Having cut out any advertisements of small vessels for sale which seemed to answer his desires, he set out, after breakfast, to make a tour amongst the shipping. Having been to Australia and back, he considered himself an excellent judge of craft of every description, and he was not entirely ignorant of their management.

With his hat, as usual, on the back of his head, a severe expression on his countenance, to awe any cheating shipowner who might wish to palm off an inferior vessel upon him, and a pompous manner, he proceeded from one to another of the vessels indicated in his pile of advertisements. One was too large, another too small, another too old, another unseaworthy; but he finally found one in the Thames that suited him admirably.

It was a small sloop, almost new, stoutly built, and intended as a fishing craft in all weathers. It had not yet been used for the purpose, however, and Loraine intimated that it would do. He then proceeded to bargain about the payment, ending by giving the sum demanded for it, and taking a bill of sale.

The owner of the sloop, which was called the *Pretty Polly*, was an old sailor, with an honest, good-natured face, named Jack Marlow, as Loraine learned on referring to the bill of sale.

"Well, Mr. Marlow," he said, quite with the air of a man of substance, "can get out soon as like. Coming 'board with inv'lid son. Like get man to work vessel. P'raps recommend one."

"P'raps your honour 'd take me," replied Jack, hitching up his trousers in true sailor fashion. "I've got no anchor ashore, an' 'd like to go cruizin'. What port are you going to make for?"

"No port, sir. Fac' is, going up north Scotland for son's health. How much you ask to go?" "S'clusive charge of boat?"

Jack replied by naming an amount twice as large as he expected to receive.

"Ver well," was the unexpected response.

Loraine bade himself in getting on board the stores, &c., as he wished to set out that very day. He gave directions to have the cabin fitted up in style, the berths to be prepared with great care, and having given Jack sufficient money to effect these purchases, he set out himself to buy wines, and the more delicate stores for the anticipated voyage.

In the excitement of his preparations, Loraine had

no time to indulge in remorse at the part he was about to play.

Some hours were spent in shopping, and at last Loraine went off to the *Pretty Polly* with a small boat-load of provisions. Jack was not on board, but the new owner of the vessel brought aboard his stores himself, and stowed them away under lock and key.

He noticed that during his absence his orders had been well carried out, a neat matting covering the cabin-floor, the windows and paint being scrupulously clean, a stout little table fixed against the wall, and the berths very well furnished and ready for occupancy.

He also noticed that lights, grogs, and such necessities had been cared for by the faithful Jack. In fact, everything necessary for the proposed voyage was on board.

Loraine had himself brought a spirit-lamp, with the necessary appurtenances for cooking, and a variety of other things, and he contemplated his arrangements with much pride.

When he had sufficiently examined his new possessions, he proceeded to set upon the table a tempting little repast of sardines, cold ham and chicken, biscuits, a couple of bottles of wine, of very good quality, and a little basket of different kind of fruits.

One of the bottles of wine was drugged, and placed by the plate intended for Walter's use.

Nothing remained now but to entrap the young artist, and Loraine took another draught of courage from a bottle in the locker, and set out on his mission, taking care to lock the cabin-door behind him.

Entering a cab, he set out for Walter's studio, and now, for the first time during the day, he was sufficiently at leisure to reflect upon his course, and to feel some remorse at the treacherous part he was about to play.

"Nev' mind," he muttered, uneasily. "Walter needs sea v'yage. Do him good. No one's goin' hurt him. Treat him well. Jes' set him shore on un'habited island, an' some fish'man fetch him home. All clear!"

To stifle the voice of his awakened conscience, he began to hum loudly some popular ditty, and soon succeeded in diverting his versatile mind from all unpleasant suggestions.

Arrived at Walter's studio, he bade the cabman await his return, and commenced to mount the stairs, singing as he went. His melody was cut short by meeting two elegantly attired ladies, who had been to view the artist's new picture. He bowed to them, politely, notwithstanding their looks of surprise and aversion, and continued his route.

Parkin, Walter's valet, was seated in the ante-chamber as usual, and stated that his young master was alone.

Without waiting to be announced, Loraine proceeded into the studio, where Walter, attired in his Turkish cap and dressing-gown, was busy upon a new picture.

"Mornin', Walter, mornin'," said the visitor, in his most beaming manner. "Hope see you well. How do? How do?"

"Oh, good morning," returned Walter, with a bow. "Sit down. I have been wishing to see you!"

"Ver' good," responded Loraine, depositing himself cautiously upon a chair, and pushing his hat still further upon the back of his head. "Markable coincidence! You want see me—I want see you!"

Walter laid aside his palette and brush, wheeled the easel towards the wall, took a seat near his guest, and then said gravely, but kindly:

"I wished to talk with you about your visit to Rosenbury House yesterday."

"Oh, do, eh? Heard 'nough 'bout it. Tired subject."

"Who has said anything about it to you?"

Loraine saw that he had made a mistake, and hastened to reply:

"Oh, ev'body. All neighbours. Heard nothin' else."

"It seems," said Walter, "that you were not quite satisfied with yourself in the matter. I wish to assure you that you need make no efforts to interest Lord Rosenbury in my behalf. Knowing him as well as I do, I consider it very singular that he should have seen you at all!"

"How singular?"

"Because we had just quarrelled, and he had shown himself my enemy. Why he should have accorded you an interview, even while still feeling no bitterness against me, I cannot understand. It must be that he thought by so doing to humiliate me. Now, father," added the artist, firmly, "say no more to Lord Rosenbury about me. I will not accept a favour at his hands. I do not desire his influence in my behalf. I have friends enough, and influence enough of my own, without need of his. You understand?"

"Should think so," replied the visitor, uneasily.

"Needn't trouble self, Walter. Do's you say. Fac' is,

m' son, I've come to say good-by, as 'twere. Goin' 'way. Leave f'miliar scenes for life on ocean wave!"

"Why, what do you mean?"

"Mean?" repeated Loraine, quite jovial again, having got rid of an unpleasant subject. "Bought vessel—nice sloop. New too. Reg'lar beauty. Goin' off to foreign climes—more 'genial scenes!"

"Are you in earnest, father?" asked Walter, in surprise. "Have you really bought a sloop?"

"Have, really. If don't b'lieve me, look here!"

He drew his bill of sale from his pocket, and extended it with a flourish.

Walter looked at it, and then asked:

"I suppose you paid for it out of mother's legacy to you?"

Loraine nodded.

"I wish you had spoken to me about your design," said Walter, returning the bill. "This seems to me a very dangerous experiment of yours. I fear you will regret it. Of course, you will have a seaman to take care of your vessel for you?"

"Course—a reg'lar, jolly old salt. A 'genial soul—loves his grog, and tobacco, well's anybody!"

This description of Loraine's intended companion did not tend to reassure Walter.

Although he had no love, nor filial respect for his father—there being nothing to awaken those sentiments—he cherished a kindness of feeling towards him, and especially desired his well-being.

"Give up your intended cruise, father, I beg of you," he said, earnestly. "If you do not, I fear you will come to serious grief. Your habits and those of your seaman being so unfortunately alike—"

"Habits? Alike?" interrupted Loraine. "What mean?"

"I mean that you are too intemperate," was the frank reply.

"Temperate! I ain't temperate. The man that says I'm temperate says what he knows nothin' 'bout. Sing'lar," added Loraine, complainingly, "how ev'body gets that idea 'bout me. 'Spose I'm different other men. Never was understood. O'tummy loves shinin' mark, heard say. Little thought you'd b'lieve idle gossip, Walter!"

"Won't you give up this plan of yours?" persisted the artist.

"No, won't—that's flat!"

"But how do you know your sloop's worth anything? Have you had any one aboard to judge for you?"

"Can judge myself. She's an A 1 sloop, Walter!"

"And you purpose starting to-day?"

Loraine replied in the affirmative, mentally wondering in what terms he should propose to Walter to accompany him to his vessel, and what he should do in case of refusal.

The artist was thoughtful, too. He saw that it would be impossible to dissuade his father from his intended voyage, and he had little faith in his estimate of the vessel.

He thought it quite possible that he had been imposed upon by some designing person with a sloop which would founder, or go to pieces in the first storm, and he resolved to see it himself before allowing Loraine to depart in it.

He signified his determination to his visitor, adding:

"If you and your sloop were to get lost, I should never forgive myself for my negligence in the matter. Wait a minute and I will accompany you!"

Loraine was so touched by this offer and the kindness of heart prompting it, as well as his own unworthiness, that he came near confessing the whole plan against Walter, and begging his forgiveness.

A timely recollection of the terrible secret that lay behind the plot, however, and the thought that that might be discovered, and he and his son be overwhelmed with ruin, caused him to harden his heart and determine anew to carry out his scheme.

Walter went into the inner room, soon returning, habited for the street, and Loraine said:

"Cab waitin' me; I lead way!"

He did so, Walter stopping a moment to give directions to his faithful valet, and they then descended to the street. Loraine gave the order, and they set off.

During the whole ride there was a suppressed elation about Loraine, varied with fits of gloom, that seemed to Walter very singular, but it failed to arouse his suspicions.

There was a remorseful tenderness, too, in the manner of his father, who insisted on giving him the best seat, and continually asked him if he were comfortable.

The ride ended, the cab was dismissed, and the two went on board the sloop together.

Jack Marlow was seated on the deck, with a couple of baskets of vegetables beside him, which he seemed to have just brought on board. He arose upon the appearance of the artist and Loraine, and said to the latter:

"All ready, cap'n. Can be off any minute!"

Lorraine replied by requesting him to show his son about the vessel, as the latter feared it was not strong enough for the proposed voyage.

This fear seemed to Jack natural enough in a landman, and he proceeded to show the sails, the masts, &c., and describe the boat in such a way as to show he had unlimited faith in her strength and seaworthiness.

The sailor saw no reason to doubt that Walter was an invalid, as Lorraine had pretended, for the artist's hands were very white and slender, and his face presented a singular contrast with the brown visage of Jack Marlow. Jack had no conception that the most perfect health was consistent with the youth's slender, compact frame.

Walter was soon convinced that the vessel was safe enough, and then Lorraine unlocked the cabin-door, ushering his guest into that neat little retreat.

"How nice it is in here!" exclaimed Walter. "How fresh and pleasant it looks. I don't wonder father, at your desire to cruise about. You have your supper ready, it seems?" he added, regarding the table.

"Yes, Walter. I got ready for you. I was going to ask you come down see us off," replied Lorraine, rather confusedly. "Sit down table, Walter. Let's have pleasant time 'gether 'fore part!"

Walter attempted to decline the proffered civility, but his host assured him that he had arranged it purposefully for him, and should be terribly disappointed at his refusal to partake of it.

Always anxious to give pleasure, when by so doing was involved no loss of principle, Walter acceded to Lorraine's desire and took his seat at the little table, exactly where his host had intended.

He praised the delicacies that composed the meal, paid particular attention to the fruits, and in consequence of Lorraine's importunities, drank half a glass of the drugged wine.

"No more, I thank you," he said, as his father pressed him to take more. "I think you would do well, father, to leave liquors behind you. They are not the best things you can have at sea."

"Necessaries life," replied Lorraine. "I take ver' little, but 'bliged to on 'count of health. Tono system. Wish, Walter, you could be induced to 'company us. A 'vyage'd you good!"

"I don't care for one this summer," was the response. "One of these days I may have a yacht, but not yet. As to going with you, father, I have too many inducements to remain in London," and he smiled. "I have an engagement for this evening," he added, "and must leave you soon. It is getting late!"

Lorraine began to be filled with fear that Walter had not taken sufficient wine to act upon his brain, and the remorseful feelings that had begun to beset him again vanished.

Walter conversed a little while longer, in his usual pleasant way, and then announced his intention of departing, adding:

"I fear I am going to be ill—I feel so strangely. My senses are quite in a whirl, and I can hardly see you. I—"

He paused, with a vague sort of wonder at his singular sensations, and attempted to rise. His limbs seemed like dead weights, which it was impossible to lift, but before he could state the fact an irresistible languor stole over him, and he closed his eyes in an unnatural slumber.

Lorraine arose, and looked at him with a countenance upon which the emotions of joy and regret struggled for the mastery, and he muttered:

"I've needed! It'll be easy 'nough now to carry him off, and get rid of him. Poor Walter! He's been kinder to me than Raymon'. He's got more heart 'n Raymon'? But Raymon' 's my own son an' I mus' stand by him. 'Sides, my own libty 's at stake!"

Carefully removing the artist's coat, Lorraine, with great effort, his movements being uncertain, lifted Walter and deposited him in one of the berths, covering him neatly.

"Raymon' said I mus' bin' him," he then said. "I hate to bin' him. But I mus' do it, an' the sooner the better!"

There had been throughout Walter's life a strong feeling of respect towards him on the part of his parents, and they had always treated him as a superior being, feeling in their own hearts that he was their rightful lord. This feeling was at work now with Lorraine, as he proceeded to bind Walter securely, yet in a manner which could not abrade his skin, or check the circulation of his blood.

When the task was finished, Lorraine went upon the deck, treated his seaman to a glass of grog, told him that his son was lying down, and that he must get under weigh.

The order was obeyed, and the Pretty Polly moved down the Thames on her way to sea.

Lorraine flitted about between the cabin and the deck, watching the breathing of Walter and the pro-

gress of the sloop alternately, for several hours. The London lights died out gradually from view, and at length the Thames itself was left behind them, and on the following day they stood boldly out into the North Sea, proceeding in a northerly direction.

(To be continued.)

A CONTENTED LIFE.

AT THIRTY.

One thousand pounds saved by thrift;

A rather moderate store—

No matter; I shall be content

When I've a little more.

AT FORTY.

Well, I can count ten thousand now—

That's better than a score;

And I may as well be satisfied

When I've a little more.

AT FIFTY.

So fifty thousand—pretty well—

But I have earned it sore;

However, I shall not complain

When I've a little more.

AT SIXTY.

One hundred thousand—sick and old—

Alas, life is half a bore;

Yet I can be content to live

When I've a little more.

AT SEVENTY.

He dies—and to his greedy heirs—

He leaves a countless store;

His wealth has purchased him a tomb—

And very little more.

THE BOHEMIAN.

CHAPTER I.

Upon the right bank of the Seine, within the confines of the town of Chatillon, stood the chateau of the Marquis Arnaud St. Hubert. It was a lovely spot—rendered so both by nature and by art.

Many of the old forest trees were still standing in the park, beneath the sheltering and shadowing branches of which were laid out tastefully-arranged walks and bridle-paths; while, here and there, to relieve the soberness of the great old oaks and lindens, were interspersed numerous fragrant and flowering exotics.

There were fountains in the park; and there were also many groups of statuary, some of which were of the finest Parian marble, having been brought from Greece and Italy by the Marquis. Towards the river lay a beautiful garden, where grew flowers and fruits of an almost endless variety, and through which led a broad gravelled walk to the boat-house and landing.

Upon the opposite side of the chateau from the river was a long, deep vale, within which was one of the richest vineyards of the Cote d'Or; and the vines of Chatillon-sur-Seine, by the favoured few who could obtain them in their purity, were considered second to none in France.

It was a dull, dreary day, in the latter part of March, 1794. Arnaud St. Hubert sat in his library, surrounded by valuable works of literature and art; but no book was open before him, nor did any of the rare gems of sculpture or painting seem just then to interest him. In other times he had been a hale, hearty man, fond of life and fond of dress; but now he was pale and careworn, and his simple garb of black velvet, without ornament of any kind, told that, for a season, at least, he had put away the vanities of outer show.

And yet the marquis was not an old man—certainly not over fifty—the few touches of silver in his hair being scarcely discernible, while his frame still retained much of its youthful vigour and elasticity. His head was bowed upon his hand, and half-muttered sentences were upon his lips, when a door was softly opened, and a silvery voice broke, for a time, the gloom of his spell.

"Dear father, I hope I do not intrude?"

"Never, never, sweet Cora. Oh, my darling, what would this poor life be without the light of your smiles?"

And no wonder that Arnaud St. Hubert's face brightened as he gazed upon his child. Just past her nineteenth year, and nine years without a mother, she had grown to be a woman in character, with all the freshness and bloom of girlhood upon her dimpled cheeks.

True and good, as she was beautiful and fair, all pure hearts turned towards her smile, and while she received the admiration of those who held the higher stations of life, blessings without number were showered upon her from many a lowly cot.

Cora St. Hubert wound her arms about her father's neck and kissed him, and then took a seat upon his stool at his feet.

"Father, you are sad and unhappy. Is there any new danger?"

The marquis tried to smile and to look cheerful, as he answered:

"My sweet child must not worry herself about such things."

"Stop," pleaded the daughter, taking her father's hand, and looking up earnestly into his face. "I am both your child and your companion. I have a right to know all that affects you. I am not a weak girl. I am a woman now; and if you will confide in me, and trust me, I will help you bear the burden."

"Blessed one!" cried St. Hubert, bending over and kissing her upon the brow, "do not fear that I shall ever hesitate to trust you. But, indeed, there is nothing new." He hesitated a moment, and then, while his countenance assumed its former gloom, he continued:

"Oh, my God! what need is there of any new terror in these days of death! Who, that ever bore a loyal heart, can call himself safe? Robespierre, that demon incarnate, grows more and more powerful every day, and with the increase of his power increases his thirst for blood. The noble and the true—those who would be the real friends of France—are falling on every hand. The terrible guillotine has been introduced even into Chatillon!"

"Into Chatillon!" repeated Cora, with a frightened expression.

"Yes," said her father. "The doomed ones of our neighbourhood will not have to be taken to Troyes any more. Gabriel Dracoon has succeeded in establishing a full court here; and I hear that the Jacobin club of which he is president has made great increase in its numbers during the past few months."

"But, father, you do not think that they will trouble you?"

"I hope not, my child; and yet I have no assurance of safety. Yesterday twenty-two men suffered death in this town; and St. Bonnet and Thionville were among them."

"Mercy!" cried the girl, with clasped hands, "what had Thionville done?"

"He had done no more than I have done. He was wealthy, and he had been a friend of the king; but he was no politician, and he had made no disturbance."

"Then why should they have put him to death? How could the court condemn him?"

"Ah, my child, you do not know what is going on in France. The government is in the hands of a mob, and every man who has held any respect for royalty is an object of suspicion. There are no forms of trial in these Jacobin courts. The merest suspicion leads to arrest, and death follows very quickly. I have tried to keep the horrible truth from you, but it can be done no longer. The most degraded men are at the head of the nation. The merest scavenger or rag-picker has more influence in the jantes of the Jacobin than could the highest noble in the land. In Paris the conduct of affairs is absolutely in the hands of the lowest rabble. Where once sat the flower of French chivalry, now sit the very dregs of all that is vile and abominable; and those wretches who have been for years steeped in poverty and crime, now have the power to strike down all who have held positions above them. In St. Bris, only last week, three young girls were beheaded because they had been heard to sing a loyal song; and in Bar-sur-Seine a whole family—a father, mother, and six children—were executed because they had been heard to express pity for some of the victims who had fallen. In Epervay, where they had no guillotine, nearly two hundred people—men, women, and children—were taken to a public square, with their hands and feet bound, and there shot to death by the soldiers! In Paris, and in other large cities, there has been a continual massacre; the slaughter has been simple butchery, and almost indiscriminate. But very few of the nobles are left in France. Such as have not been butchered have fled to other countries."

Cora gazed into her father's face a while in speechless horror. She had heard something of this before, but she had not known all.

"Dear father," she at length said, "why do you not flee? Oh, if there is danger to you here, let us seek some other place—some place where we can escape all this evil."

"I have thought seriously of it, my child. I did think, over a year ago, of going to Germany; but as I had always lived a quiet life, at least so far as politics were concerned, I had not much fear of being disturbed; and, furthermore, I did not believe that such a reign of terror could long continue; but in this I was mistaken."

"It is not too late now," pursued Cora. "Oh, I fear Gabriel Dracoon. If he has power in Chatillon, we are indeed unsafe."

"Have you any especial reason for dreading that man?" asked the marquis.

"I know that he is a wicked man," answered Cora, shuddering.

"He is more than that," added St. Hubert. "He is—"

The speaker was interrupted by the entrance of a servant, who announced that a man was in waiting who wished to speak with the citizen St. Hubert.

"Who is he?"

The servant cast a quick glance at Cora, and shook his head.

The marquis signified to his daughter that she might retire, and after she was gone he was informed that the man in waiting was Gabriel Dracon.

By the exercise of much self-control, St. Hubert hid the sudden pang that seized him upon hearing that name, and, in a calm tone, directed that the visitor should be sent up to him.

Gabriel Dracon was a man to be feared by those whom he disliked, and not to be freely trusted even by his friends. He was not more than five and thirty years of age; but he had lived long enough to commit much sin, and entail much suffering upon his fellows. Originally he had been a boatman, engaged between Chatillon and Troyes, and it was whispered that while thus engaged he had robbed and murdered more than one luckless traveller who had taken passage with him. At the outbreak of the Revolution, he had joined the first Jacobin club formed in the Cote d'Or, and by his brutality he had worked his way up to a station of power. He was tall and gaunt of frame, with a low, contracted brow, eyes black and piercing, a nose like the beak of a vulture, mouth large, with a heavy nether lip, and with a skin near the colour of time-worn parchment. His hair was black and coarse, and his thick beard, which he kept cropped as close as scissors could cut, gave him a peculiarly repulsive look.

This man entered the library of the chateau with an independent, impudent swagger, and took a seat near the table, throwing his hat upon the floor, and crossing his legs, without speaking. The marquis had risen from his chair, but when he saw his guest thus unceremoniously dispose of himself, he resumed his seat.

"Citizen St. Hubert, I have come to see you on business. Have you time to spare?"

"I have," replied the host, swallowing his disgust, and speaking quite calmly.

"You probably know that we have established a court in Chatillon, and that we have erected a guillotine."

"I have heard so."

"Yes, citizen, it is even so, and I assure you it makes it quite handy for us. Such of our victims as were not worth taking to Troyes were forced to hang or shoot, which I didn't like at all. But now, *ma foi!* it is as easy as can be. You must come down and see it work!"

St. Hubert could not repress the shudder, nor could he hide the quiver of his lips. Dracon noticed it, and his eyes gleamed.

"By the way, citizen, it has been whispered that you are not particularly friendly to the Republic."

The marquis started, not so much with fear as with emotions of indignation.

Could he have spoken his mind, he would have told just what he thought of the demon power that had dared to style itself a Republic; but such thoughts were not to be spoken then.

"I know not," he said, "how I can have given occasion for any such judgment against me."

Gabriel Dracon shook his head with a sinister smile.

"Ah, my friend, we do not always judge a man by what he does, but by what he does not do. In times of great public emergencies, when the efforts of all good people are needed towards reform, the citizen who lifts not his hand to the work becomes an enemy. Do you comprehend?"

The marquis did comprehend, and the colour forsook his face as he met the gaze of those black, piercing eyes.

"In short," pursued the Jacobin, after watching the effect of his words a moment, "you, Arnaud St. Hubert, are suspected of being in favour of a restoration of monarchy."

"Indeed, citizen Dracon," cried the marquis, "you must have been misinformed. I have expressed—"

"Enough," interrupted the visitor, with a wave of the hand. "There is no need that you should excuse yourself to me. I have not come to condemn you, nor have I come to arrest you. But, sir, look into your own heart; look back upon all that you have thought or spoken during the past two years; look at the position you have occupied; and then, remembering your rank under the wicked king, tell me what you think would be your fate if you were brought before our court as a loyalist? What think you?"

St. Hubert trembled from head to foot. The thought

that a low-born villain should thus hold power over him—power upheld by law—was startling and humiliating.

"What think you?"

"I should hope to be able to prove—"

"Bah! Don't waste words, St. Hubert. You know you could prove nothing. The day that sees you within the walls of our council-chamber will see you led to the guillotine! You know this well enough. But you are more fortunate than the most of men, for you hold the key of your safety in your own hands! If you are arrested you die!"

"Gabriel Dracon," cried the marquis, unable longer to endure the lurking fire that shone out in those sunken eyes, "what do you mean by all this? Why have you come hither? What is your business?"

"I have come hither to save you."

"To save me?"

"Yes. With one simple assurance from me, you may live on in peace and safety, but if I give not that assurance your doom is sealed."

"Surely, sir," said St. Hubert, speaking like one in a troubled dream, "I do not understand you."

"I can explain myself in a very few words," Dracon shifted the position of his legs, and then proceeded:

"You at present possess two things which are dear to you; and it is for you to say whether you will give them both up, or whether you will give up one and retain the other. I speak of your life and your daughter. You cannot keep them both."

"How, sir?"

"I say you cannot keep them both. Give me your daughter, and I will give you your life."

St. Hubert started up from his chair, but quickly sat down again.

"What do you mean?"

"Are you bereft of your senses?" returned Dracon. "Is not my meaning plain enough? Cora St. Hubert shall be my wife, and you shall live."

"Gabriel Dracon," cried the marquis, "you do not mean what you say. My daughter be your wife!"

"Is not a husband better than the guillotine?"

"The guillotine for me?"

"Ay! and for her, too!"

"Wretch!"

"Ah, my friend, you forget to whom you speak!"

St. Hubert buried his face in his hands. He knew that he was as completely defenceless against the malignity of the Jacobin club as he might have been against the attack of death itself; and he knew that the man before him possessed all the power he claimed. Finally, he looked up, and was upon the point of speaking, when Dracon interrupted him:

"Stop, St. Hubert. I intend to give you time to think of this. I do not want your answer now. I will state the case plainly, and then leave you to make up your mind upon mature deliberation. In the first place, the order for your arrest is already in writing, and if I do not step in to save you, you are lost. No other power on earth can keep you from the guillotine; but, if you will give me your daughter you are a free man. I think the fair Cora, if she be as good as she is beautiful, would gladly purchase her father's life by so simple an act. But this is not all. If you die, what then becomes of your child? She either follows you to the guillotine, or she comes to me. So, you see, she is mine if I will, at any rate; but in that I love her for her great beauty, and would have her learn to look kindly upon me, I prefer that she should come to me without the shadow of mourning upon her. I would rather she should know that I saved her father's life. Now, sir, you have the whole matter before you, and I give you until to-morrow at this time to think upon it. At the expiration of twenty-four hours, I will see you again in this place."

With these words, the Jacobin chief arose from his chair and left the room as unceremoniously as he had entered.

Half an hour after this, Cora entered the library and found her father engaged in packing up some papers. He was very pale, his lips were compressed, and he worked with strange energy.

"Father, who was that man?"

"It was Gabriel Dracon," the marquis answered, in a low tone, without looking at his daughter.

"What did he want?"

"He wants my Cora for his wife."

The girl clasped her hands and staggered back to a seat.

"He says if I will give him the hand of my child I may live."

Cora started up and caught her father by the arm. Was he speaking in sober earnestness?

Then Arnaud St. Hubert sat down and calmly related all that had transpired between himself and Dracon.

"I know, my child," he said, in conclusion, "that my life is in that man's hands if I remain here."

"And what will you do?"

"Do you feel strong, Cora?"

"Strong enough for any duty that may come."

"Then hasten to your own apartment, and pack up your jewels."

"You will leave Chatillon?"

"Yes—this very night. I have some servants that I know I can trust, and I have fleet horses. To-morrow's sun must find us many miles from here. Be under no excitement, my child. Work calmly and save your strength for the road."

CHAPTER II

UPON the opposite side of the river from the Chateau de St. Hubert, shut in by thick groves, so as to be almost excluded from the rest of the world, stood the villa of Leopold de Courcy.

It was a quaint edifice of grey stone, built during the time of Louis XIV., and though the broad park had been allowed to run wild, and the garden had been neglected, yet the dwelling had been neatly kept, and in the immediate vicinity thereof things bore a look of order and refinement.

Leopold de Courcy was a true type of the French country gentleman, five-and-forty years of age, rather below the medium height, but of good frame, and well formed.

He had been knighted by Louis XVI. for valuable services, but beyond this he had no claim to rank save such as his wealth gave him.

By the poor of the neighbourhood he was beloved for his goodness and his charity, and by those of higher station he was respected and esteemed for his intellectual and social qualities.

And yet he mingled but little in society.

Of late years he had become sober and thoughtful, and he might have been called misanthropic had he not spent so much of his time in ministering to the wants of the lowly and the needy.

There were premature wrinkles upon his brow, and his dark, glossy hair had been touched with silver too soon.

As we find him now, towards the close of a dull and dreary day, he paces up and down the hall, with his hands behind him and his head bent. Ever and anon he stops by the open door, and gazes out through the porch upon the dripping trees in the park.

He has just gained the far end of the hall, when he is aroused by the sound of a heavy footfall behind him, and on turning he finds that a man has unceremoniously come in by the open way.

The intruder was coarsely clad, and had a sullen, barbarous look.

He was older than De Courcy, and his face showed that he had dipped somewhat deeply into dissipation; yet there were no grey hairs upon his head, though there were plenty of wrinkles upon his cheeks.

He was tall and muscular, and the depth and breadth of his chest and shoulders indicated that he was gifted with great physical power.

His neck was long, and his head quite large, the cerebral developments making it apparent that he naturally possessed considerable intellect.

His eyes were large and somewhat sunken, and in colour a sort of greenish grey. The nose was long and sharp, the lips thin and pinched, and the chin quite small and narrow.

Such a man, well-dressed and tidy, with the signs of dissipation overcome, might have passed for a gentleman, though he could never have inspired confidence in the bosom of one at all read in physiognomy, but as he now stood, rough clad and untidy, no was simply repulsive.

"Gaspard Coppin!" exclaimed de Courcy, quivering from head to foot, "how dare you—"

"Bah!" interrupted the intruder, with an impatient wave of the hand. "We won't have any of that kind of talk. You know very well that I dare do anything I please in this place. *Morbleu!* I have not done with you yet. If I chose I might present you to the court of our Jacobin club and have you sent to the guillotine, but that would not suit my purpose. I prefer to keep the old hold upon you, because while you live I can enjoy your munificence, whereas if you were to be led to the guillotine I should lose it all. I am not so high in the club as I might be. Gabriel Dracon was a bigger villain in his younger days, so he overtops me now. I hope, my dear brother, I find you well to-day."

De Courcy moved back a pace as though he would get as far as possible from the man before him. He was certainly disgusted by the fellow's familiarity, and yet he trembled as one trembles who is stricken with some mortal fear.

"Coppin," he said, with considerable dignity, "if you have business with me let it be transacted as quickly as possible, for I would be alone."

"Diable! my dear Leopold, you needn't have taken the trouble to tell me that, for I don't like your company any better than you like mine. Of course you can guess my business."

"I never do business upon guesswork. If you have anything to say, speak it plainly."

"I will speak plainly enough, never fear, Sir Leopold." The man took off his dirty hat and made a low bow, in which mockery was too apparent to be mistaken by even the most casual observer. "I am in want," he continued, twirling his hat upon his thumb, "and I must appeal to you for the loan of four hundred livres."

"Villain! Will you hunt me thus?" cried De Courcy, with a sudden flush of anger. "It was only two weeks ago that I gave you a like sum."

"I know it," returned Coppin, with calm gravity; "but, you see, money isn't a thing that a fellow like me can keep by him a great while. *Morbleu!* I wish I knew better how to lay it up, and make it multiply; but I don't, and probably I never shall; so it's very lucky for me that I have so good a banker. Only four hundred livres this time, De Courcy."

"Look ye, Gaspard Coppin," said the host, with a strange mixture of dignity and fear in his manner, "you ask too much. My purse will not bear such strain a great while. If you must haunt me thus, if you must have money at my hands, let your demands be more moderate. Let a hundred livres answer your purpose now."

"It won't do, sir," replied Coppin, doggedly. "But, I tell you, my purse will not long hold out at this rate."

"Bah! why do you tell that stuff to me! What is four hundred livres to you?"

"Not much, I admit; but when we come to multiply that sum many times over, the result is considerable."

"Never mind, I must have the four hundred now."

"And how long before you will be after more?"

"*Parbleu!* that is more than I can tell. But I promise you that I won't come again until this is all gone. Come, come, my friend, don't let us have any more words. I see your son coming up the park. I suppose you would prefer that he should not know our business?"

With a sudden start, as though some sharp pang had pierced him to the heart, Leopold de Courcy turned towards a door near at hand, and bade Coppin follow him.

A short distance brought them to the library, where, without further words, the host counted out the money, and handed it to the Shadow.

"There are four hundred livres. Now go—go, and, in mercy's name, don't let me see you again for a month!"

"I'll make it go as far as I can, Sir Leopold. Of course you keep an account of this?"

"Don't insult me further. You have the money. Go!"

With another of those mocking bows, Gaspar Coppin placed his hat upon his head, and made the best of his way from the library and from the villa.

When the unwelcome visitor had gone, De Courcy sat down and buried his face in his hands; but he was not long suffered to remain alone, for very soon the door opened, and his son entered.

Paul de Courcy, Sir Leopold's only child, was two-and-twenty years of age, and must have looked very much as his father looked in youth.

He was rather below the medium height, compactly built, free and light of limb, with black, wavy hair; eyes large and brilliant; while the rich blood mantled his cheeks and brow with a tinge of robust health and vigour.

He had yet known none of those trials and sorrows of life that draw their thankless lines across the face, though there was an expression of earnestness—of soul-labour and thought—plainly stamped upon his handsome features.

The only real sorrow he had ever yet experienced resulted from the death of his mother ten years before; but that could not be lasting.

He had loved her, as she had loved him, most devotedly; and he now believed that she was the happy dweller in a better world than this, which faith led him to cherish her memory rather as a source of joy and consolation than of grief.

But he could not be unmindful of the terrible state of affairs to which the government of his country had been brought, nor of the manifold dangers by which all true men were surrounded; and this made him earnest and thoughtful, whereas, under the influence of unshaken peace and prosperity he might have been as light and gay as the lark that perched upon the great lindens in the park.

When his son entered, Leopold de Courcy tried to appear calm and at ease, but the thing was beyond his power. His limbs still trembled, and there was an unwonted pallor about his lips.

"You have been down into the town, Paul?" he said.

"Yes, father; and I have heard some deep mutterings, too. But tell me—what is the meaning of the visit of that man?"

"What man?" returned De Courcy. He had no thought of prevarication; but he sought time to compose himself.

"I mean the man who has just left the villa—Gaspard Coppin; I think his name is."

"Oh," replied the parent, with a forced smile, "he came on business."

"And what business can he have with you?"

Paul seated himself, and then resumed:

"Father, I wish you would trust me in this. Pardon me if I speak plainly, for I do assure you that my whole heart goes out to you in sympathy and love. I cannot see you suffer unmoved. I have seen you, month by month and day by day, growing paler and more melancholy, and I cannot put away the thought that the visits of Gaspard Coppin have something to do with it. Am I not right?"

De Courcy made no reply, and presently his son added:

"Dear father, what terrible secret does that man carry in his bosom?"

"Secret?" echoed Sir Leopold, in a startled tone.

"Yes, father, I am sure he has some power over you. Do not misunderstand me. I know that you can have done no wrong; but in such times as these, when terror sits enthroned everywhere, it is an easy matter for the veriest villain to gain a hold upon the purest man in the land. What is it?"

"Not now, not now, my son," pleaded De Courcy in a supplicating tone, at the same time putting forth his hand to give emphasis to his plea, "let that matter rest for the present. If you love me, do not press me further. You spoke of having heard deep mutterings in the town. What were they?"

The youth saw that further questioning touching Gaspard Coppin could only give his parent pain, so he allowed himself to be led away from it.

"The mutterings which I heard," he said, "were both against you and the Marquis St. Hubert. Father, we are not safe in Châillon. How long would it take you to gather up your money and jewels?"

"Not long, my son," replied Leopold. "And if there is imminent danger we had better flee."

"I know there is imminent danger," said Paul.

"You and St. Hubert are both wealthy, and you are both suspected of being aristocrats. As sure as the heavens are above us just so sure are the eyes of the Jacobins turned upon you."

If the young man had looked to see his father turn pale and tremble at this announcement he was doomed to disappointment, for instead thereof the knight started into new life, and an expression of great relief rested upon his features.

"My son!" he cried, starting up from his seat, "we will set forth this very night. I am satisfied that we can be no longer safe here. With our best horses, and the few servants we shall need, we can reach Switzerland in four days."

"I think we can easily do that, father, and as for servants the fewer we take the better. I would suggest that we only take our faithful valet, Maurice. He is brave and shrewd, and may be valuable to us in more ways than one."

"You are right, Paul. We will only take Maurice."

"And, now," pursued the youth, "while you are commencing preparations, I will go over and warn St. Hubert. Perhaps he would like to go with us."

De Courcy's countenance changed in a moment.

"No, no, Paul, we must not go in company. Of course the marquis has been warned ere this."

"I am not sure of that, father."

"Well, well, you may go and warn him of his danger; but, mind you, not a word to him of our intended movement."

Paul de Courcy sat down in a state bordering on bewilderment.

"Merciful powers!" he cried. "What do you mean by this? Upon my soul, I believe that Arnaud St. Hubert is one of the best and warmest friends you have in the world. What is this enigma?"

By one of those efforts which even an exhausted man can make under the impulse of strong necessity, Leopold de Courcy calmed his features and assumed a reassuring smile.

"My son, I am looking to the safety and well-being of both St. Hubert and myself. If we attempt to escape together, we may help to betray each other. It is far better that we should take different roads. He will probably turn his face towards Germany, while I shall go to Switzerland. I have friends in Bern who will give me a cheerful welcome. You may go and give the marquis due warning, but I beg of you to do nothing more. Make haste, now, and I will be collecting my most valuable papers while you are gone."

Paul was not at all satisfied with this, and had he felt perfectly free to state exactly why he was so anxious to travel in company with the marquis, he might have been more persistent; but as it was, he concluded to let the matter drop for the present, though he was very

far from putting it from his mind; and as he pursued his way down the park after leaving the library, he fell into a train of painful thought on the subject.

He thought first of Gaspard Coppin, and wondered what could be the source of the strange control which that villainous Jacobin exercised over his father. He might have solved the problem by laying it to the power which every follower of Robespierre held over the aristocracy, had he not known that Coppin had held this same mystic influence long before the opening of the Revolution.

He could remember, years before, when he was a mere boy, of seeing Gaspard Coppin at the villa, and he had wondered then how his father could have dealings with such a man. And from that time to the present, that same shadow had seemed to lay darkly across the way. It was past his comprehension.

"But," said the youth to himself, as his thoughts took a new channel, "what can there be between my father and Arnaud St. Hubert? Surely the marquis is kind and friendly, and allows no opportunity to slip of showing his good feelings. And upon my life, I do believe he looks favourably upon my growing intimacy with his daughter. If I thought Cora loved me as I love her, nothing should prevent me from taking the road with her father. If I lose her now, I shall never see her again. But—perhaps she does not love me, after all. She has not been so free of late as she used to be. The old familiarity has vanished and I have sometimes fancied that my presence was painful to her."

Paul was thus soliloquizing, when he was roused by the sound of footsteps ahead of him, and upon looking up he beheld Jacques Tobin, St. Hubert's trusty valet, approaching at a rapid pace.

Said Jacques was a man of middle-age, stout and muscular, with a face that might have been exceedingly homely had it not been for the softening, warming influence of the genial humour and good nature that beamed upon it.

"Ah, Master Paul, I have met you."

"Yes, Jacques, and I have also met you! Whither are you going?"

"I was going to the villa: but, perhaps, having met with you will do as well. Were you going to the chateau?"

"Yes."

"On business?"

"To do an errand."

"To my master?"

"Yes."

"And I was bound to do an errand to your father?"

"Of what purport?"

"Perhaps my errand is like unto your own."

"Was it of warning?"

"Yes."

"Against the Jacobins?"

"Speak low, Master Paul. Yes."

"I was about to convey the same to the marquis."

"Then you need go no farther, for the marquis is already warned."

"And is he making preparations to leave Châillon?"

Jacques hesitated.

"Enough," said Paul. "Of course you will accompany him?"

"I suppose so."

The valet twisted his hat upon his head, and finally added:

"Master Paul, besides the errand to your father I have one for you. As I came out of the chateau, a little fairy ran after me and caught me by the arm, and said to me: 'Jacques, you will see Paul de Courcy?' I told her very likely. 'Then ask him,' she went on, 'if he and his father will leave Châillon to-night? And if he says yes, ask him what road he will take?' There is the errand, Master Paul. Now, what answer shall I take back?"

"Of course," said the young man, half to himself, "there is no need that I should go to the chateau."

"No, you had better not, for just now all hands are very busy."

"It was Cora who sent the errand?"

"You've guessed it."

Paul de Courcy did not hesitate to trust Jacques Tobin; for he knew the man to be as true as the finest steel, so after a moment's reflection, he said:

"Tell Cora that my father and myself will leave to-night, and that we shall take the road to Mirebeau, and thence on towards Switzerland. Will you tell her this?"

"I will."

"And you will tell it to no one else?"

"Of course not."

"And now Jacques, can you tell me what route the marquis intends to take?"

"I cannot, Master Paul. He has not said a word to me on the subject. But we have no time to waste. Of course we can all pray that all may come out well."

So Jacques Tobin turned back towards the chateau,

while Paul retraced his steps to his own home; and as he went, he derived not a little comfort from the message which he had received from Corn. Why should she have wished to know the route he would take?

Ah, why?

(To be continued.)

JASON TONKING'S BLUNDER.

PETER HARDING's country seat was called Lillendale. It was a lovely place, laid out in the old English style, with a house built in the Tudor school of architecture. He was very proud of it, and never so happy as when entertaining his guests. He kept quite an open house, and having ample means, was very profuse in his hospitality.

At the present time his mansion contained, besides his own family, but one guest, a fashionable widow, quite young, called Mrs. Lesage—an early friend and acquaintance of Mrs. Harding's, though they had not met for quite a number of years before this visit.

Mr. Harding's family consisted of a grown-up son, Valentine by name, and a ward, a pretty girl, nearly eighteen, Angeline Wharton.

By listening to a little conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Harding, we shall gain some insight into the family history.

"Don't be cowardly, Mr. Harding," said Mrs. Harding, continuing a conversation which had been pursued with considerable acidity upon both sides, "and attack your own son behind his back."

"Oh! I'd attack him often enough to his face," returned Mr. Harding, "only you won't let me." "You are so unjust to him, and seem only to take pleasure in thwarting him."

"Thwarting him! Why, I've indulged him in every whim! Didn't he have a tutor at home instead of going to school? Didn't he prefer Cambridge, because I suggested Oxford?—and didn't he go into the army, because my heart was set on seeing him a minister?—and now don't he go mooning and sponging about with Angy, because I told him that I should particularly object to his marrying her?"

"Marrying her, indeed! He's not so silly, dear boy—he'll do better than that; besides, you must be blind, indeed, if you don't see there is some one else who admires her."

"Who's that, pray?"

"Jason Tonking."

"Jason Tonking! Nonsense, he's a confirmed bachelor!"

"He's nothing of the sort. You say you expect him to-day, as he has accepted your invitation to spend a month with us. I'll sound him, and find out his sentiments, at any rate, and then perhaps you'll have off persecuting poor dear Valentine. A better son never lived."

"Yes, he can coax and wheedle you out of anything."

"He'd never stoop to any such meanness as coaxing and wheedling."

"Wouldn't he? Pray how did he get the money to extricate himself from that last little difficulty?"

"Mr. Harding, young men will be young men. I'm sure you need not hold yourself up as a model, for—"

"Confound it, Mrs. Harding—am I never to hear the last of your lectures on my past conduct?"

Mr. Harding finished the discussion by walking away, as he generally did, in a high state of indignation, leaving his wife master of the "position." In the garden he found Angeline, who mollified his feelings by presenting him with a lovely moss-rose.

"Thank you, dear," said Mr. Harding; "but you are the loveliest flower I know."

And he patted her fresh and blooming cheek quite fondly.

"That she is, father," exclaimed a cheery voice; "as I have often told her."

Angeline blushed and ran into the house. Mr. Harding turned wrathfully towards his son. A splendid-looking fellow he was—tall and erect in carriage, with an unmistakable military air—with a bright, clear eye, a bronzed visage, and full beard, wearing a fatigue cap, carelessly perched on his crispy black locks, leaning leisurely against the trunk of a tree, smoking a cigar.

"You are at it again, are you?" cried Mr. Harding.

"Don't get excited, father," returned Valentine, coolly. "You may bring on a fit of apoplexy. Only consider how stout you are getting."

The apoplexy was Mr. Harding's great bugbear—his grandfather had died of it, and he stood in mortal dread of an attack. He was about to respond in a milder key, when his attention was attracted by a carriage stopping in front of the house.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Valentine, throwing away the stump of his cigar; "there's Jason Tonking!"

Father and son hastened to receive the visitor—a great favourite with both.

Valentine opened the gate, and Jason drove in, alighted, and grasped a hand of each, while the groom took charge of his horse.

"Here we are," he cried, gaily. "Come to kill a little time for you."

You could not help liking Jason Tonking, he had such a genial, taking way with him. He was the beau ideal of a gentleman in dress and appearance. His apparel was faultless, from the patent-leather boots to the unwrinkled kid gloves, that fitted his small hands to perfection.

It was hard to set the age of Jason; he could pass for twenty-five with those who had not known him long, but old friends hinted at forty, though the ladies, with whom he was an especial favourite, would not believe it.

He was rather good-looking—many might have called him handsome. He had light, silky hair, mutton-chop whiskers, slightly tinged with a reddish hue, a fair complexion, quite fresh, and pinkish eyes. Take him altogether, he was what romantic young ladies call a "duck of a man."

"Come into the house," said Mr. Harding. "I have got a charming widow here. I want to introduce you to her. Take care of your heart—I think she can conquer the unconquerable."

"Nonsense," said Jason; but he took off his hat and ran his fingers through his well-oiled locks as he followed Mr. Harding into the house.

They found the ladies in the front parlour. They had seen his carriage stop, and were prepared for him.

Mrs. Harding and Angeline greeted him as an old friend, and then Mrs. Harding presented him to Mrs. Lesage—a rather small woman, with a pale and intellectual face, splendid black hair, curling in natural ringlets, and a sharp grey eye.

The silk of her heavy moire antique rustled as she advanced to meet him, and when she came from the shade of the window-curtain, and he saw her features, his eyes dilated and a look of blank astonishment spread over his face.

"Is it possible?" he stammered.

"To be sure it is. It's me—don't look so astonished." This was said quite sharply. "You did not expect to find me here, did you?" Mrs. Harding, you thought you were going to add a new friend to my list, but Mr. Tonking and I are quite old acquaintances. He did not know me under the name of Mrs. Lesage—that accounts for his surprise."

"Knew you before you were married?"

"Precisely. I would not say I knew him, because I wanted to take him by surprise. A good joke, wasn't it? Ha, ha, ha!"

Mrs. Lesage laughed merrily, not to say a little spitefully, and they all joined in, Jason being quite vociferous in his mirth—so much so that a close observer might have imagined his gaiety to have been forced. However, it created no observance in that circle. He soon recovered his equanimity, and the conversation became general and lively.

In the course of the day, Jason contrived to obtain a private interview with Mrs. Lesage. She had strolled out in the garden, with a book in her hand, ostensibly to read. She took a seat in the grape-arbour, and he, as she had expected, followed, and placed himself beside her.

"Certainly, this looks like destiny," said Mrs. Lesage.

"Destiny!" ejaculated Jason Tonking; "of course it is—there's no escaping it. Well, what's to be done—shall I go off, summoned by telegraph, to see an uncle from whom I've great expectations, or will you discover that the place don't agree with you?"

"I don't mean to attempt to control your actions, but I am going to remain where I am for a week. I can't see why this meeting should put us out; it is by no means a novel situation; for the first year after our separation, we were always crossing each other's paths."

"I am sure through no fault of mine."

"Whose fault was it, then? I took to travelling, as the surest way of avoiding you, knowing what a confirmed stay-at-home you were."

"I was forced to travel when you left me, in order to distract my thoughts."

"Having me no longer to distract with your whims and fancies."

"My dear Matilda—I mean Mrs. Lesage—let us not refer to the past. May I venture to inquire why you changed your name?"

"How could I go about as your widow, when every one knows you to be alive; besides, the bore of being asked, 'Are you Mrs. Tonking?' Was I not always meeting you?"

"Very true; it was awkward, certainly, and I think you have acted wisely. Your plan of action, then under existing circumstances, is to maintain your position. Very well, I will maintain mine. We are

merely acquaintance, and solemnly pledge ourselves not to divulge our secret?"

"By all means."

"Widowhood seems to agree with you, as well as bachelor-life does with me. What truly sensible people we have shown ourselves to be."

"Yes! I flatter myself I displayed no small degree of worldly wisdom, when I suggested our separation."

"You suggested it—I like that. Why, I insisted on it! Don't you remember the dispute we had, about whether the breakfast-room was to be paper or chintz?"

"Pray, sir, don't remind me of the outrage on a woman's feelings of which you were guilty—when you wished me to have the drawing-room amber, when I had selected blue."

"I'm sure it was about the breakfast-room we differed, but I'll throw the drawing-room in if you like. I know you drove me from the house, and that I wrote you a note expressive of the wish that we might never meet again."

Mr. Tonking arose to his feet in some excitement, in which action he was imitated by the lady.

"I beg your pardon: I went to my dear Aunt Worriall, and sent you a note to say that, as far as I was concerned, you might break up our establishment."

"I took you at your word, and sold everything."

"You had not the delicacy of feeling even to reserve our wedding presents."

"I did not wish to be reminded of the blight of my existence. I had done all I could to make you happy and had failed."

"You certainly failed. Is it possible that you can forget how your impetuosity and blundering caused me increasing discomfort? Why, you married me before I knew where I was, and separated from me in a still greater hurry."

"My impetuosity? I'm the coolest man alive! Blundering, indeed! Why, every one but you relies upon my judgment."

"Pray, how much mischief have you done, with your hasty conclusions and thoughtless acts? Didn't you break off more marriages, and give rise to more false reports—unintentionally, I admit—than any other man in society?"

"How can I help other people being foolish? They either tell me half their stories, or make some blunder which misleads me; you yourself were the cause of nearly all the difficulties, by telling me only part of what you heard."

"Mr. Tonking, allow me to observe we are treading on dangerous ground. We are separated—I am happy, so are you—we will not make ourselves the talk of this place, therefore, not a word. A week is a short time for us to practice the self-denial of meeting and not quarrelling; so let us be friends—externally, at any rate, and forget we were ever man and wife. Good-morning, Mr. Tonking; I shall have the pleasure of seeing you at dinner-time."

She dropped him a low curtsy, and gracefully retired.

"Gad, she's a wonder!" mused Jason Tonking, gazing after the retreating form of his wife. "To think of our meeting in this manner, after being separated for more than three years. Well, this is the end of a love-match. How I doted on her from our first meeting till we were married—it was only ten days, to be sure; we were no sooner man and wife, than we discovered that we hadn't a taste or sentiment in common. I love the country, she detests it—will be in town all the season, parties every night, to say nothing of the opera. When that was over, I naturally hoped for quiet; but no, her only taste was for fashionable life at watering-places, where the principal ingredients are dirty sand, bad champagne, high prices, stived-up rooms, and surf-bathing. Then we never could agree where to reside, or even to having a window open or shut. At last we came to an open rupture, and parted; it was but to meet again, for wherever I went, I was sure to fall in with her. I was introduced to her as a partner at the Prince of Wales' ball, and we met twice on the boat; so I gave up travelling, and settled down. And now that I have ventured forth from my secure retreat, to visit an old friend, and have a quiet bit of rustication, here's my wife again! Well, what's to be done? I suppose she's right. We had better fight it out—retreat on either side would only excite suspicion."

After this long train of reflection, Mr. Tonking was moving slowly towards the house, when he encountered Mrs. Harding.

"My dear Mr. Tonking," she cried, "I am so glad to find you alone, for I want to talk to you about a little scheme I have in my head."

"I am all attention," returned Jason, suavely.

"I am rather in a little bit of a difficulty about Valentine."

"What! that boy again in a scrape? He's incorrigible!"

"Well, no—not in a scrape; but I am rather

puzzled with respect to him and his cousin Angeline. I don't quite see my way clear in that quarter, and I'm naturally anxious."

"Yes, yes; I see."

"The truth is, Mr. Harding has a very strong objection to Angeline as a daughter-in-law, because he thinks the world will say he planned the marriage, in order to get Angeline's money into his family."

"Angeline has money, then?"

"Why, you knew that, didn't you?"

"Never heard of it till now."

"Her father left her twenty thousand pounds; and as Mr. Harding is her guardian, and one of her trustees, that is the reason he sets his face against this match. As for me—"

"I understand," interrupted Jason.

And this was the way he understood it. The prudent mother wished to bring the match about without seeming to have any hand in it.

"Now, seriously," pursued Mrs. Harding, "what is your opinion of Angeline? That is what I want to know."

"Charming girl," returned Jason, with fervour. "I quite love her."

She knew he did, and so she had told the incredulous Mr. Harding; and now she felt the satisfaction of knowing she was right.

"Don't you think she will make a capital wife?" she continued.

"First rate—and such a fortune! Is it settled on herself?"

Mrs. Harding thought he seemed rather keen after the money; but she hastened to reassure him by saying:

"Yes; but that could be arranged. I've no doubt part would be paid over to her husband."

"Then I'll soon manage it. Consider it as a settled point, as far as I am concerned. I quite understand the delicacy of your position."

"A thousand thanks! But, my dear Mr. Tonking, will you let me say I hope there may be no long courtship? I do hate that sort of thing."

"So do I; I always like to strike while the iron is hot. Two people mooning and spooning about, wishing everybody else anywhere out of their way; and such a bore when you come upon them suddenly, it's so deuced awkward. I'm sure I'm the last man to encourage any such folly—sharp's the word."

"I know that I may leave everything to your taste and judgment. There's Valentine coming; I'll not meet him just yet; he must not think I've had any hand in the affair—so good-by."

Taking this as a hint, Jason left the arbour, to meet Valentine, giving Mrs. Harding the opportunity to withdraw into the house undiscovered.

"My dear friend," cried Valentine, "congratulate me—I know you will—I've just told my love to dear Angeline, and she has accepted me."

"She has! Well, you are a cool hand. What will your respectable parents say?"

"Oh, I expect all sorts of opposition, but must outlive that. Angeline will be of age in six months, and we will then marry in spite of guardians."

"You will, will you? Then you are a nice wilful pair. What do you mean by enticing a pretty girl into wedlock? I'm ashamed of you!"

"But, my dear Jason, I'm sure I may rely on your good offices with my parents?"

"That you may, I can tell you; as far as your mother goes, you are all right there."

"You don't mean it? Why, she has been pestering me to death about the wealthy Miss Jones."

"She's not serious. Miss Jones! Why, she's older than you are."

"She has such an amiable disposition, my mother says, and twenty thousand pounds."

"Nonsense! your mother wishes you to marry Angeline. Now, I know it—don't interrupt me—so you've nothing to do but get married as fast as you can."

"No, you are not serious?"

"I am; your mother has told me all about it in confidence—not a word—your father would make a show of displeasure, to save appearances; so my advice is, that you go off quietly, and get married on the sly—don't interrupt me, my boy—I'll manage it all with your parents. You won't betray me?"

"Betray you! What do you mean?"

"Why, don't say I told you. The truth is, that both your parents wish the match. They can't say so, and I've undertaken to manage the affair."

"Angeline will never consent to an elopement."

"Leave her to me. I'll talk to her. Consider it a settled thing—at any rate, with your father and mother!"

"Well, if you were not so positive, I should say you were mistaken."

"Mistaken, indeed! I'm never mistaken; I never made a mistake in my life. I'm sharp, but sure!"

"If that is the case, I'll go and find Angeline, and tell her my news."

Time passed on very pleasantly at Lillendale.

A new comer was added to the number of guests—a college-chum and brother-officer of Valentine, a rather good-looking young fellow, Henry Maxwell by name. He took quite a fancy to Mrs. Lesage.

"Why, what has become of everybody?" exclaimed that lady, one pleasant afternoon, as she found Mr. Harding alone on the verandah.

"This is Liberty Hall," returned he; "every one does as he pleases here. How do you like Mr. Tonking? Is he a nice fellow?"

"Very agreeable. A bachelor, isn't he?"

"I don't exactly know. Mrs. Harding fancies that he has been married, though he never alludes to the subject. She has an idea that he married some old dragon for money."

"Then Mrs. Harding is wrong, for he did nothing of the sort."

"Then you knew his late wife?"

"I said nothing of the kind. I was only sure Mr. Tonking would be incapable of anything so contemptible as marrying an old dragon for her money!"

"Bravo! I'm glad you take his part. Well, between you and me, I think he is getting out of his bachelor ways."

"Indeed! How?"

"Look there, in the garden. What do you see?"

"Mr. Tonking walking with Miss Wharton."

"Yes, and talking very earnestly, too—pleading his cause very ardently; at least, so Mrs. Harding says!"

Mrs. Lesage looked uneasy, and fidgeted about a little.

"He's talking to her," she said, but he's not making love, though she could not see what business he had to be talking to her at all. "No, no, Mr. Tonking has too natural a taste to be caught by a pretty school-girl."

"That's what I tell Mrs. Harding. She is such a woman. She's set her heart on it, and so she's been at him till he's consented to the arrangement."

"What arrangement?"

"Why, his marriage."

"His marriage! With whom?"

"It's quite a secret, but I don't mind telling you. With Angeline."

"Nonsense!" cried Mrs. Lesage, sharply. "I tell you, it's impossible—it can't be done! You don't know what you are talking about. I'll not allow it!"

Mr. Harding, perceiving her emotion, came to the natural conclusion that she had set her cap for Mr. Tonking, and her jealousy had been roused by his communication.

He imagined that he had got into a scrape.

"Well," he hastened to say, "at any rate, don't say a word. The fact is, Mrs. Harding and I thought it would be a good match."

"A good match, indeed! Depend on it, Mr. Tonking will never venture on such a step—though there is no saying what men will do, now-a-days."

"I certainly should like to see him married to Angeline, but think he would find a more suitable match in Mrs. Lesage," responded Mr. Harding, gallantly.

"Pray don't mix me up in any way with Mr. Tonking."

"Certainly not. I'm sure I'd no idea—I should have been delighted to have seen my friend so blessed."

"Blessed with whom?"

"With you. I'm sure he admires you very much."

"My dear Harding, pray don't let that thought enter your head. Mr. Tonking and I must ever be to each other what we are; my destiny is fixed—I have no longer a hand or a heart to give. I regret to say, that a letter received to-day will oblige me to shorten my visit to you."

"I hope not."

"I am sorry to leave, but I have some important business with my lawyer in the city, that demands my presence."

"Indeed!"

He thought that sounded very odd.

"Should the opportunity present itself, I should be obliged if you would let Mr. Tonking know my sentiments respecting him."

Mrs. Lesage withdrew into the house, in quite a flurried state, and relieved her feelings by commencing a flirtation with Maxwell. Mr. Harding considered her a charming woman, who knew her way about; but that Jason Tonking was a bit of flirt. He must talk to him; and, as luck would have it, along came Mr. Jason Tonking, looking serenely happy, with the consciousness of his efforts to make other people so, and a red rose in his button-hole.

"Hallo, Harding!" he cried. "What, alone? Well, I think we've had a pleasant afternoon."

"Charming! How could it be otherwise, in such a spot, with such company? Come I want to talk to you a little about Angeline."

"I'm all attention."

"You quite understand my sentiments respecting her marriage?"

"An odd fox," thought Jason; "he's at the same game as his wife." He considered it funny.

"For certain reasons, I've a particular wish not to be mixed up in this affair. The fact is, that were I to interfere about it, I should appear to be behaving unhandseemly to my co-trustee, who is anxious that his cub of a son should marry her. So, you see, I want to be able to say that I know nothing about the matter."

"Yes, yes—I quite understand; if Angeline wishes to marry, you would not withhold your approbation, but do not wish to be consulted?"

"Precisely. Let Mrs. Harding conduct the whole affair; I wish to know nothing about it. My co-trustee will be displeased; but, really, his son is such a lout, I couldn't bear to see the dear girl so sacrificed. He only cares for her money."

"The deuce take him—he shan't have her! I'll take care of that."

"I know you will—I'm delighted; but, I say, old fellow, I must tell you that I thought you a little too sweet on the fair widow."

"What widow?" asked Jason, surprised.

"That's a good one! Why, Mrs. Lesage. But you don't stand any chance there, I can tell you—she's booked."

"Booked?" reiterated Jason, who seemed very dull of comprehension. "Who's booked?"

"Why, Mrs. Lesage."

"What on earth do you mean?"

"Why, I mean that Mrs. Lesage is going to be married again; I'm certain of it."

Jason looked perfectly astonished at the intelligence.

"The deuce she is! But who told you, and what's your authority?"

"The best possible—Mrs. Lesage herself."

"This is very pretty!"

"You seem taken aback."

"Do I? Oh, dear no! But how came you to be admitted into her confidence upon the subject?"

"Why, the truth is, I rather joked her about your attentions."

"What did she say?" asked Jason, eagerly.

"Was up in a moment, and said that her mind was made up; and, in fact, seemed to have very strong feelings on the subject."

"An aversion to me—oh?"

"I don't say that exactly. She says her plans are fixed for life—that she has given her hand and heart. Between ourselves, I suspect—"

"What do you suspect?"

"That our fair widow is only a widow bewitched."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, she talks about having important business with her lawyer in town. Now, what can that be but a divorce affair?"

Mr. Tonking looked very glum.

"No doubt you're right; she's getting up a divorce."

"Well, at any rate, that's no affair of ours—dismiss her from your mind. I must be off. I say, be less attentive to Mrs. Lesage, or you'll get yourself talked about, and that would be awkward under your circumstances. Good-by, for the present."

Mr. Harding hurried away under the impression that he had managed that affair very nicely.

He left Mr. Tonking in a state of utter bewilderment. Under his circumstances. What could he mean by that? Had she told him their real position, and taken him into her confidence that he might break the matter of the divorce to him? It could not be possible.

He determined to have an interview with Mrs. Lesage and satisfy his doubts. It was not until the next day that he had an opportunity. Then he was fortunate enough to find her in the drawing-room. She started at his entrance, he came in so abruptly.

"Mr. Tonking!" she exclaimed, "how you made me jump. I did not expect to see you here."

"I dare say not," he returned, quite brusquely, "and wish me further, no doubt; but I am not so easily bamboozled as you think."

"Who wishes to bamboozle you, as you so elegantly express it?"

"I've no time for being elegant; I must be plain and straightforward with you."

"What do you mean?"

"Mean? That your conduct is disgraceful—that you are not only ruining your fair fame, but compromising me."

"I must say this comes well from you, who have abandoned me in the most heartless way."

"I deny it; you forsake me. No, no; you'll not get your divorce on the grounds of desertion."

"Get my divorce, indeed! Your behaviour would puzzle me if I did not know your plans. I had intended to have quitted this roof without deigning to notice your conduct, and meant to have denounced

you by letter to Mr. Harding. I will thwart your designs."

"What designs?"

"What designs! Before I answer that question, let me hear what there is in my way of proceeding that so highly incenses you."

"You ask that, do you? Well, then, I'm disgusted at your behaviour with Maxwell."

"My behaviour with Mr. Maxwell!" She was pleased to find that her little flirtation had aroused his jealousy, as it proved that he still cared something for her. "You are dreaming."

"Oh, dear, no. I have watched you both. I overheard you speak of me disparagingly; others have remarked your conduct with him likewise, and we all agree that it's disgraceful."

"Who dares insinuate anything against me?"

"Insinuate! I like that. I don't insinuate—I bring a direct charge."

"I've no patience with your folly. This is but a miserable attempt to further your designs upon that poor young girl."

"My designs on what young girl?"

"Angelina Wharton, whom you are about to marry when you've got rid of me. This is base, indeed!"

"I marry Angelina Wharton! Who told you I was going to marry her?"

"Mr. Harding."

"Then he's a—"

"Spare your invectives, sir. If there is nothing between you and Miss Wharton, pray why were you talking to her so earnestly in the garden yesterday?"

"Saw me! Of course you did. What a blundering old fool that Harding is. Well, then, I was—I don't mind telling you, though it's a secret—I was arranging her marriage with Valentine."

"You were? Can I believe you?"

"Did you ever find me guilty of falsehood?"

"Never. But why should I believe you when you will not take my word as to my conduct with Mr. Maxwell?"

"You were flirting with him, and you knew it."

"I confess it, but it was innocent enough—merely to revenge myself for your supposed flirtation with Angelina."

"It's dangerous playing with edged tools, my dear."

"Not when you know how to handle them, my love. Do you doubt me?"

"No. It's all right with me; but how can you clear yourself with others? Your fair fame is compromised by your equivocal position."

"Can you not clear it up by stating truth respecting me?—at least, when I've left the house, not before."

"What! tell them you are my wife? When they know you hate and despise me. And you are going in for a divorce?"

Mrs. Lesage looked astonished.

"Going in for a divorce? Who says so?"

"Why, Mr. Harding; and he said, moreover, that you had told him to tell me."

Mrs. Lesage looked vexed.

"I believe there must be something in the air of this place that produces insanity. What could have induced Mr. Harding to fancy such a thing?"

"You told him you had business at your lawyer's, is that it?"

"So I have—to prove my Aunt Worral's will."

"Is that all?" Jason felt quite relieved. "How then am I to get in order to clear up this affair? I must tell them the truth."

"On the whole I think it would be as well. I see no other way out of this difficulty; but wait until I am gone."

"Matilda, you have made up your mind to go?"

"Why, yes, Jason, I don't very well see how I can avoid it."

"My dear, I have just made a very important discovery."

"What is it?"

"Your jealousy was excited by seeing me in conversation with Miss Wharton, and my jealousy was aroused by your flirtation with Maxwell—that proves that we are not so indifferent to each other as we imagined. Perhaps our separation was not such a wise proceeding after all. Fate seems determined to bring us constantly together. Suppose we accept our destiny and reconstruct our union?"

"With all my heart! I freely confess I have never known a moment's true happiness since we parted!"

"And I have been the most miserable dog alive!"

"At this critical moment they were disturbed by loud voices on the verandah. There was evidently a domestic dissension in the Harding family. They stepped to the window, which opened on the verandah, and there beheld Mr. and Mrs. Harding, Valentine, and Angelina."

"I know you both wish me to marry Angelina," exclaimed Valentine.

"I know you both wish me to marry Angelina,"

"I know you both wish me to marry Angelina,"

"I know you both wish me to marry Angelina,"

"I know you both wish me to marry Angelina,"

"I know you both wish me to marry Angelina,"

"I know you both wish me to marry Angelina,"

"Marry Angelina!" exclaimed both his parents, in chorus.

"Who told you so?" continued Mr. Harding.

"Tonking, of course; he said that both you and my mother wished it."

"I never did," returned Mrs. Harding, indignantly. "What effrontery—it is false, sir!"

"He said that as you did not wish to appear to have a hand in it, I'd better run away with her; and I'd have done it, only Angy wouldn't hear of such a thing."

"Wouldn't she, though?" asked Mr. Harding.

"You don't think, my dear uncle," said Angelina, "I would requite your kindness by such an act of disrespect?"

"I'm sure you wouldn't; do you think she would, my dear?"

"Certainly not; but really, this Mr. Tonking—what a viper he is!"

"No, no," expostulated Valentine. "I'm sure he misunderstood you; he's a noble fellow."

Jason thought it high time to interfere; so he stepped through the window, upon the verandah, saying:

"What appears to be the difficulty, my good people?"

"I've a pretty crow to pluck with you," cried Mrs. Harding.

"Pluck away, then."

"I accuse you of deliberate falsehood."

Mrs. Harding was enraged.

"No, my love," interposed Harding, "not falsehood. I'll not believe that. Jason, did you really misunderstand Mrs. Harding in the matter of Valentine and Angy?"

"Misunderstand her? Certainly not! She asked me to arrange a match between them, and so did you!"

"I never said a word," cried Mrs. Harding. "I'll never believe—"

Her husband interrupted her.

"You must not impugn our friend's veracity, my dear; besides, I've changed my mind on the matter, and am resolved to consent to the marriage. Valentine, my boy, you can have her."

"Thank you, I'm glad you consented, as it would have annoyed me to marry against your wishes, as I certainly should have done."

"If you could have got my consent," cried Angelina, archly.

"There," exclaimed Jason, triumphantly, "that is the way you wanted things all along, and yet you pretend that I misunderstood you. How could I marry Angelina? I've got a wife already."

"You!" exclaimed everybody, astonished.

"Exactly. You thought I was a bachelor, but I'm married, for all that. I might say, a married bachelor! And here's my wife—permit me, this lady, whom you have known as Mrs. Lesage, is Mrs. Jason. Tonking."

There was another burst of astonishment.

"And now the curtain falls on our comedy. We quarrelled and separated—saw the folly of our conduct, and have re-united. Here's to our union—long may it wave!"

Mr. Tonking kissed his wife, and Valentine kissed Angelina.

They had a happy wedding in a fortnight, and everybody was happy.

Mr. and Mrs. Tonking reside at their country seat of Ilchester, in peace and unanimity, and both are cured of their roving propensities. G. L. A.

GENTLEMEN IN THE RANKS.—Military members of parliament frequently assert that the most troublesome soldiers are those who have, at one period of their lives filled some better situation in life; and that they would rather have the most decided rough than the broken-down gentleman or man of what may be called the better classes. This may be true—no doubt in some respects it is. But whose fault is it? Our officers—at least the greater number of them, for there are some of them who take a common-sense view of the subject—have an intense dislike to any scheme which narrows the gulf between commissioned and non-commissioned ranks. When a recruit joins a regiment, and it comes to the notice of his officers that he has been in a better position at one time, the remark generally is, that it is to be hoped "the dashed nonsense will soon be taken out of him." The non-commissioned officers almost invariably take their cue from their superiors, and so the unfortunate "gentleman recruit" has certainly not a good time of it. In addition to every corporal and sergeant in the troop being more or less "down on him," every awkward gesture and every blunder at drill or riding-school is made the subject of public derision in the barrack-room, for the men too often follow the example of the non-commissioned officers. Thus the man who, most likely, entered the army hoping for speedy promotion,

and had in him the qualities that would make a good soldier, a capital non-commissioned officer, or an experienced officer, may take to drink to drown care, pass his days in the guard-room or the cells, get flogged, and end his life in hospital from delirium tremens.—*Why we can't get recruits.*

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION

WITHIN the last few years Dover has reasserted her former boasted position as the highway to the Continent. Two railways daily pour throngs of passengers on to the sea borders of this flourishing town, thence they proceed by boat to Calais; the return journey of each packet bringing a batch of candidates for transport by rail inland.

The railway companies vie with each other in taking passengers through in the least possible space of time. They have reduced the time of transit to the veriest minimum to suit the requirements of this active age.

But the age is not satisfied; its activity demands further concessions. It speed cannot be increased, find some other way of saving time, is the cry. So engineers have been knocking their heads together lately, and the result is an application to Parliament for permission to still further expedite passenger communication between our shores and those of la belle France.

And this is how it is proposed to effect this object, whereby the important space of forty minutes is to be saved to the traveller on each journey:

A new pier is to be constructed close by, and eastward of the Admiralty pier; it is to reach some 960 ft. out to sea. Connections are to be made by tramways between the lines of the London, Chatham, and Dover, and the South-Eastern Railways, and the head of the pier. Similar arrangements are to be effected at Calais, and between the two harbours steam vessels of great power, speed, and barthen are to ply.

As to the *modus operandi*, we believe the intention is to convey the railway trains along the tramways to the pier head, and when they reach that point powerful lifts will effect their deposit—minus the locomotive—in the special vessels. Arrived at the other side, the trains will there be hoisted bodily to land and sent on their way.

This saving of twenty minutes at each port, and the comfort of not having to quit the railway carriage once on the journey, are two points that must meet with public appreciation, although the conferring of such a boon will cost somebody something.

We presume the enterprising London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company is at the bottom of this scheme; at any rate, we know there are engineers of eminence behind it, and believe it has the support of the Emperor of the French.

THE more I see of Spanish men and Spanish character, the more I hate them. They are brutalised beyond description.—*Over the Pyrenees into Spain. By Mary Eyre.*

THE EVILS OF A GOOD COMPLEXION.—He and the other men pointed out that I could not be ill, for I had a colour. No one pities me when I am ill, on account of this hereditary misfortune. I never lose my colour, even when fainting, till I become senseless. In fact, colour is with me a certain sign of illness; while when people pity me, and say how ill I look, I am feeling remarkably well. It was so with my father. His hectic hue always deepened in illness, and he did not lose it even in death. No one could have looked on that flushed cheek, and believed it was the face of the dead.—*Over the Pyrenees into Spain. By Mary Eyre.*

POLLUTION OF RIVERS IN IRELAND.—In consequence of the introduction of gas for lighting the college at Maynooth, and the refuse being allowed to flow in the river Rye, which runs close to the town of Maynooth, and through the demesne of the Duke of Leinster at Carton, emptying itself into the river Liffey, near Lucan, the fine breed of trout formerly existing, and which was carefully preserved by his Grace, is nearly extinct; and it is greatly to be feared that unless measures are adopted to put a stop to the nuisance, the numerous fish in the lake at Carton will ultimately share the same fate.

REFORM BILL RETURNS.—We have just seen copies of the circulars issued from Whitehall, calling upon the local authorities to forward to the Poor-law Board schedules of the rating of different classes of tenements in counties and in cities and boroughs; obviously for the purpose of ascertaining, according to the latest assessments, what additions will be made to the present constituencies by a "vertical" extension of the franchise. Downing Street would like to know, if the qualification be lowered, what number of additional voters will be let in at certain downward steps, and therefore asks, in respect of the counties, for the number of occupiers rated at £10 and under £12; at £12 and under £15; at £15 and under £20; and

at £20 and under £50. With regard to the cities and boroughs, the particulars sought are the numbers of occupiers in each at £4 and under £5; at £5 and under £6; at £6 and under £7; at £7 and under £8; at £8 and under £10. The returns are to be filled up from the rate-books in respect of the "rateable value" of each tenement; not according to the "gross estimated rental," as heretofore used for electoral statistics. The difference, we need hardly say, is very material between the gross and the rateable value.

TEMPTATION.

By J. F. SMITH.

Author of "The Will and the Way," "Woman and her Master," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXX.

He sees the face of right 't appear as manifold
As are the passions of uncertain man;
Who puts it in all colours, all attire,
To serve his ends, and make his courses hold.
He sees that let dearest work what it can—
Plot and contrive base ways to high desires—
That the all-guiding Providence doth yet
All disappoint and mock this smoke of wit.

S. Daniel.

MILES—for the driver of the hackney-coach was no other than poor Fanny's former persecutor—continued to urge the horses to their utmost speed, trusting to the chapter of accidents to rid himself of Barry and his friend, who, despite the desperate rate at which they were being whirled along, continued to cling most pertinaciously to the back of the old-fashioned, lumbering vehicle, which creaked and groaned whilst jolting over the stones in Parliament Street, as if it had the rheumatism in every one of its crazy springs and joints.

The straps by which they held on, fortunately for the young men, were the only things not rotten about it.

"Curse them!" muttered Miles—meaning the straps—not the gentlemen—"why don't they break? But it is always my luck! Down on it again!"

Despite the wish thus energetically expressed, the straps did not choose to break, and the coach continued its way till it arrived opposite the entrance of the Old House of Lords, where numerous carriages were waiting till their noble owners had done twaddling for the good of the country, and the patience of the tired reporters in the gallery.

The footmen—time out of mind a gregarious race of beings—were standing in knots, discussing the politics of the day, on the outside of the House, with as much earnestness, and probably as much sense, as their masters in the inside; whilst their fellow-servants, the coachmen—who, from their elevated position in life, were naturally of a more philosophic turn of mind—sat most of them slumbering on their boxes—pictures of lazy, fat, sublime content.

The conversation of the politicians in livery was interrupted by the approach of the hackney-coach, which, at a distance, had all the appearance of a private carriage with two footmen behind.

"One of the ministers," observed the noisiest of the speakers, a gentleman radiant in crimson plush, green, and gold.

"More likely a royal duke!" said a second.

"Room!" cried a third, to the coachman of a political prelate, whose vehicle was drawn up exactly in front of the entrance to the House.

The man, half asleep, gave the horses a sudden jerk, and drove into the centre of the road, thinking to make place for the new arrival. The consequence was that the wheels of the humble hackney became locked in those of the more aristocratic equipage.

Barry and Lee Strange leaped to the ground in an instant. Unfortunately they both rushed to the same door of the coach.

"Can't you see where you are going?" exclaimed the bishop's coachman, in an angry tone.

"A common hack!" shouted several of the footmen, in a tone of derision, gathering round the two vehicles.

Several officers of the House drew near. For some minutes there was a Babel of languages, cursing, and abuse—in which, it is scarcely necessary to add, the vulgar prevailed.

During this confusion, the man who was inside with Fanny darted out on the opposite side, and disappeared in the crowd.

"That's him," mentally observed Miles, who saw the move, "is worth any money! He has got his eye-teeth about him!"

Satisfied that the object for which he had risked his neck was accomplished, he remained quietly upon the box. Every moment gained was an advantage.

By this time the two friends had forced open the door of the coach. It was empty.

"Well, gentlemen!" said Miles, in an ironical tone,

"I hope you have had your lark out—frightening the oases, and all but upsetting that respectable old governor what handles the ribbons so cleverly!"

"No fault of mine!" he added, touching his hat to the prelate's coachman, who still remained upon his box, boiling with indignation.

"Feller!" was the only reply the man in livery designed to make to what the speaker doubtless considered a very conciliating speech.

"As you please!" answered Miles.

"Villain! Where is she?" demanded Barry.

"Where is who?" said the ruffian, with the most provoking coolness.

"The child you have stolen!"

At hearing this accusation, Miles set up a hearty laugh.

"Child I have stolen!" he repeated; "that's a good un; as if I hadn't got kids enough of my own! I want no more mouths to feed! But it won't do, masters! If you are gentlemen, behave as such, and pay me for the pretty lark you have had!"

"Ay—ay! pay the man!" shouted the footmen.

Here the officers interfered, and declared that unless they satisfied his demand they would take the two friends into custody; adding, that they might consider themselves fortunate at being let off so easily.

"Of course!" exclaimed Miles, who began highly to enjoy the joke. "These gentlemen won't see a poor fellow imposed upon! It's my belief you are no better than a couple of pickpockets—pity there isn't a pump near!"

"There is—there is!" was the general cry, and a dozen hands were outstretched to seize on the two friends. Then it was that the heavy cane of Lee Strange rendered essential service both to himself and the young painter: without being in the least particular where or how he struck, he soon cleared a passage through the crowd. Footmen and grooms lay sprawling in the road; not even the dignity of the officers of the House was respected.

"This way!" cried the victor, as he darted into St. Margaret's Churchyard.

Barry followed the sound of his voice. Fortunately the night was a dark one, and their pursuers not over-courageous. The most eager fell over the tombstones in their haste, and several, who had incautiously approached within reach of the cane, measured their length in a less agreeable fashion upon the rough, iron-knotted pavement.

In the midst of the confusion Miles, who had no wish to be either detained or identified, drove off—not forgetting, as he did so, to give the coachman of the right reverend prelate, who was standing on the box, shouting to the pursuers, a cut with his whip over the face, which that very dignified person long and bitterly remembered.

"Say gentleman next time, my fine feller!" said the ruffian, with a chuckle. "Manners is the cheapest thing as is!"

Before returning home, where he doubted not that he should find the prize for which he had risked so much, the speaker drove back to the Haymarket, in order to return the hackney-coach to its real owner.

"Well," said Lee Strange, as he and Barry, exhausted by the chase, stood under a solitary lamp-post in one of the narrow lanes leading to the Almonry, "now that the fun is all over, perhaps you will tell me what it has been about. After this, who shall accuse me of inconstancy? Have I not proved myself a very Pyralis—followed like a bound upon the track?" he added; "though what the game course me if I have the least suspicion; but I suppose it was a petticoat!"

"A child!" answered the young painter, with a sigh.

"A what? A child? Am I mad or moon-struck? I've known sportsmen, when they could not find a fox, hunt the trail of a red herring; but I never heard of following that of a pay-pon before! My dear fellow," continued the speaker, "does it not strike you that we have made ourselves very ridiculous?"

This was put with such perfect seriousness by his volatile though kind-hearted companion that poor Barry, despite his disappointment, could scarcely restrain a smile. In as few words as possible, he related to his friend sufficient of Fanny's history to impress him with a sense of the danger she ran, and the misery her loss would occasion to those who were dearest to him.

"God help the sweet child!" he added, dashing aside a tear; "she has fallen into the hands of a cruel enemy!"

Lee Strange was one of those followers of fortune who have lost everything but heart in the chase: that was still as pure, fresh, and generous as when he encountered the first treachery in love or deceit in friendship.

Though young, he had suffered much; but suffering had produced an effect opposite to the one it has on most of the world. It had taught him sympathy—not apathy.

He listened to the history of Fanny, which his friend related, with feelings of pity and indignation.

"Would I had known it!" he muttered, through his clenched teeth, at the same time grasping his "young man's best companion," as he facetiously termed his cane; "I would have killed the ruffian on the box!"

"And now we have lost sight of him, and, with him, every clue!"

"Consider the pump!" said Lee Strange, in an apologetic tone—for he felt that his impetuosity had been productive of more mischief than good; "no friendship could stand that—tossing in a blanket is nothing to it! But the night is too young to despair yet!" he added, in a more cheerful tone. "Where are we?"

"In the parlours of the Almonry, I should say," replied Barry, looking round him; "the most dangerous place in London!"

"And exactly the sort of neighbourhood," observed his companion, "to which the persecutors of poor Fanny would resort. Courage—Courage! I have a presentiment! I know you will tell me that I have had a hundred in my time, and they have all failed; but this one I am sure will not!"

It was a forlorn hope—still it was one—and the two young men continued their search till morning, when, disappointed and dispirited, they separated: Lee Strange to his lodging; Barry to his home in St. Martin's Court.

"Poor Sally!" he murmured, as he opened the door, which has not been locked all night—for not one of the inmates had retired to rest; "it is sad news I bring. God! how the absence of one being whom we love can desolate the heart!"

Eagerly during the long hours of the night had his footsteps been listened for. No sooner were they heard, than the heads of old Meg and Sally appeared at the door of the little parlour. As for the old actress, she was too much agitated to quit her easy chair: still, with the obstinacy peculiar to age, she had refused the repeated solicitations of her faithful servant and lodger to retire to her bed.

"My child—my child!" she exclaimed, in a tone of grief far more agonising than any she had employed in the exercise of her art, because more natural.

The painter, completely spirit-broken, sank upon a chair.

"You have found her!" said Sally, with an hysterical sob; "I am sure you have. You could never have the heart to return without her. You think to break the joyful intelligence to us by degrees—but joy does not kill; and if it does, better to die than linger in this horrible suspense. Fanny—Fanny!" she repeated, as if she expected the child would rush into the room at the sound of her voice; "come to your sister! Come—come!"

"He ain't found her!" muttered old Meg, in her hard, iron voice, which sounded like the knell of hope; "he is too good to trifle with us!"

There was a gentle tap at the door. The blind lieutenant made his appearance to inquire after the safety of his little favourite. Herr Weitzer and his wife followed him, and in their presence Barry related everything that had taken place, from the abduction of Fanny to the termination of his unfruitful search.

"Poor child!" said the soldier; "she evidently has enemies who are wealthy, who seem disposed to brave all risks to remove her."

"They have murdered her!" exclaimed Mrs. Watkins, wringing her hands. "I am sure they have—the wretches!"

"Mine Got! I wish dey have—dat's all!" observed the musician; "I will hang dem, if I sell mine fiddle to pay de rope!"

At the word "murdered" poor Sally burst into a passionate flood of tears, and frantically entreated her lover to hasten once more in search of her adopted sister—forbidding him ever to see or think of her again till she was restored to her.

The young painter was at his wit's end—he knew not where to go; but he rose to comply with the imperious command of the speaker, whose grief blinded her to the injustice she was guilty of.

Meg insisted on accompanying him.

"Better remain where you are for the present!" said the lieutenant; "I have reflected on the circumstances, and do not think that there is any immediate danger to our little favourite! Those who have carried her off are aware that she has friends—for they have proved their energy and perseverance! One of the ruffians—the driver—can at least be recognized!"

"I should know him from a thousand!" observed Barry, at the same time pulling his hat over his brows, in the peculiar style in which Miles was accustomed to wear it, and imitating his furtive, cat-like glance.

"That's him!" shouted Meg, clenching her hands till the nails made a visible impression upon her hard, honest palms; "I wish I had him—that's all!"

"I shall wait on the magistrate in the morning," continued the blind man, "and consult with him what is best to be done! I am not rich, but my means more than suffice for my wants now," he added, with a sigh. "I will offer a reward of fifty pounds for her recovery."

Had Rothschild suddenly appeared in the midst of the mourners, and proffered his thousands, he could scarcely have produced a more profound impression than did the munificent offer of the speaker: not one of them, with the exception of the old actress, had ever possessed such a sum in the whole course of their existence.

"Fifty pounds!" repeated Meg, who had a vague idea that it was something between ten and a million. "Very handsome—very handsome indeed!" observed Mrs. Watkins.

Sally looked up in his face, and smiled faintly through her tears. Fifty pounds—it was a fortune! With fifty pounds they could do anything. Fanny would soon be restored to her, if money could accomplish it.

By the advice of the lieutenant, the party at last retired to snatch a few hours' repose, of which they had so much need.

(To be continued.)

LIKE all narrow seas encircled by highlands, it is visited by sudden and tremendous storms. We were on it in September and October, perhaps the stormiest season of the year, and were repeatedly detained by gales. At times, while sailing pleasantly over the blue water with a gentle breeze, suddenly, and without any warning, was heard the sound of a coming storm, roaring on with crowds of angry waves in its wake. We were caught one morning with the sea breaking all around us, and unable either to advance or recede, anchored a mile from shore, in seven fathoms. The furious surf on the beach would have shivered our slender boat to atoms, had we tried to land. The waves most dreaded came rolling on in threes, with their crests, driven into spray, streaming behind them. A short lull followed each triple charge. Had one of these white-maned seas struck our frail bark, nothing could have saved us; for they came on with resistless force; seaward, in shore, and on either side of us, they broke in foam, but we escaped. For six weary hours we faced those terrible trios, any one of which might have been carrying the end of our Expedition in its hoary head. A low, dark, detached, oddly shaped cloud came slowly from the mountains, and hung for hours directly over our heads. A flock of night-jars (*Comotus vexillarius*), which on no other occasion come out by day, soared above us in the gale, like birds of evil omen. Our black crew became sea-sick and unable to sit up or keep the boat's head to the sea. The natives and our land party stood on the high cliffs looking at us and exclaiming, as the waves seemed to swallow up the boat, "They are lost! they are all dead!" When at last the gale moderated and we got safely ashore, they saluted us warmly, as after a long absence.—*Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi.* By David and Charles Livingstone.

AFRICAN MISSIONS.—We encamped beside the village of the generous chief, Moloi, who brought us three immense baskets of fine maize meal, ten fowls, and two pots of beer. On receiving a present in return, he rose, and, with a few dancing gestures, said or sang, "Motota, Motota, Motota," which our men translated into "thanks." He had visited Moselekatse a few months before our arrival, and saw the English missionaries, living in their waggon. "They told Moselekatse," said he, "they were of his family, or friends, and would plough the land and live at their own expense;" and he had replied, "The land is before you, and I shall come and see you plough." This again was substantially what took place, when Mr. Moffat introduced the missionaries to his old friend, and shows still further that the notion of losing their country by admitting foreigners does not come as the first idea to the native mind. One might imagine that, as mechanical powers are unknown to the heathen, the almost magic operations of machinery, the discoveries of modern science and art, or the presence of the prodigious force which, for instance, is associated with the sight of a man-of-war, would have the effect which miracles once had of arresting the attention and inspiring awe. But, though we have heard the natives exclaim in admiration at the sight of even small illustrations of what science enables us to do—"Ye are gods, and not men"—the heart is unaffected. In attempting their moral elevation, it is always more conducive to the end desired, that the teacher should come unaccompanied by any power to cause either jealousy or fear. The heathen, who have not become aware of the greed and hate which too often characterize the advancing tide of emigration, listen with most attention to the message of Divine love when delivered by men who evidently

possess the same human sympathies with themselves. A chief is rather envious his good fortune in first securing foreigners in his town. Jealousy of strangers belongs more to the Arab than to the African character; and if the women are let alone by the traveller, no danger need be apprehended from any save the slave-trading tribes, and not often even from them.—*Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi and its Tributaries.* By David and Charles Livingstone.

AHAB THE WITTY.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE anxiety of Salome increased hourly with the absence of her father. When a day and a night had passed, she became seriously alarmed for the safety of Boabdil.

Her fears being founded on intimate knowledge of her father's cupidity, she was placed in a position truly embarrassing, as she shrank from betraying the weakness of a parent.

Boabdil, since his flight, had found means to communicate with many of the disaffected in the kingdom, and at regular intervals Ali was dispatched to a certain place agreed upon, to deposit measures and take away such papers as might be left.

An old ruin had been selected as the most fitting spot for those private and important transactions, and Ali stole from the stone castle on this mission the very morning after the Jew's terrible adventure with Hamet.

As luck would have it, the ruin referred to was the identical one in which Sadoc had employed so fatally the poisoned dagger destined by Hassan for himself.

On entering the ruin, the first object that Ali saw was the body of Hamet, stern and swarthy even in death.

Turning his eyes from this ghastly spectacle, he beheld Sadoc, with his back against a column, sleeping profoundly; for the old man, worn out with fatigue, could no longer resist the claims of nature.

This unexpected presentation deprived Ali, for a little while, of speech and motion; but being a person of sense, he controlled his surprise, visited the secret deposit, secured some letters on his person, then came back and considered the Jew more attentively.

The thing, however, that most perplexed him, was the chain rivetted to his wrist. Taking hold of the end of it, he gently pulled till the sleeper was awakened.

The Israelite, on feeling himself dragged by the arm, manifested most genuine but ludicrous terror, shaking all over, and crying out at the top of his voice.

It was a long time before Ali could quiet him; but by-and-by, being brought to reason, and recognizing the face of Boabdil's servant, was as extravagant in his joy as in his fear.

Finding him unable to walk, Ali set him upon his beast, and walking by his side, conducted him back to the castle, vainly endeavouring to extract from him some account of his adventures. The Jew's only reply was to the effect that he had fell into the hands of the despoiler. His arrival at the stone chamber was the occasion of universal surprise and conjecture.

His haggard appearance, swollen feet, and the chain on his wrist, were each signally significant of suffering.

They had placed him by the fire, and were overwhelming him with questions and attentions, when an arrival yet more extraordinary occurred.

First, came Ahab, then followed an old man of flowing locks, and venerable appearance, and lastly Sir Raoul Mornay.

The entrance of these parties produced effects quite different on the different persons present.

Boabdil turned deadly pale, and uttered an exclamation of amazement on perceiving the old man.

"This," said Sir Raoul, advancing and pointing to Hassan, "is Abaddon; a famed and remarkable magician, for whom I bespeak your respect."

Boabdil, who was standing nearest to the fictitious Abaddon, looked at him haughtily, without acknowledging the introduction by word or sign.

Both Leoline and the Jewess contemplated the demeanour of the prince with wonder. Gradually the pallidness passed from Boabdil's face, and a burning flush succeeded it. Anger, contempt, and unspeakable disdain, shot from his dark and luminous eyes. His jewelled fingers first sought his dagger, then his scimitar, then wandered to his throat. His breathing became hurried, and his breast heaved with emotion.

The pretended magician, confronting him, gleamed at him with his cold, fierce blue eyes, displaying a countenance as stern, hard, and unbending as any of those sculptured on the walls of Sadoc's palace. Sneering hate curled the old king's proud lips.

The princess and Salome perceived that something remarkable was about to be developed.

Sir Raoul did not speak, but stood conveniently near, with hand upon his sword, ready to interpose, if needful.

Boabdil glanced reproachfully at his sister, and said, in a sorrowful voice:

"The English knight has betrayed us!"

"It is false!" exclaimed Leoline, indignantly. "You do him foul injustice!"

Sir Raoul smiled, and a joyous flush lent a momentary glow to his countenance. He did not speak.

"Cruel king and false father," said Boabdil, in thrilling tones, "thou canst lay aside thy mummy! Remember, most unnatural of parents, our meeting beneath the Vermilion Tower. But for some pity for thy grey hairs, but for some lingering respect for the blood in thy veins, and but for horror of so dire a deed, that hour had been thy last! But the hand of Allah was on me, and I stayed my vengeance. Old man, why comest thou now?"

He pointed to Leoline, and added:

"May we not dwell even in the caves and dens of the earth in peace? Must we fly continually before thy face? What evil canst thou wish upon her whose only sin is love and adherence to me? Look upon her! Had ever father a sweeter daughter and a fairer? But I will not attempt to soften a heart like thine, or turn a purpose as fixed and unalterable as life itself. I ask again, why art thou here?"

Muley Aben Hassan cast from him his disguise with haughty scorn. Leoline, enlightened by the words of her brother, now presented a striking figure of astonishment and dread. Salome, throwing her arms about her waist, stayed and supported her agitated person.

"I am here," answered the king, in tones heavy with wrath and hate, "because I am betrayed, and Allah has forsaken me! Behold, apostate boy, the downfall of thy father, and the final humiliation of his ambition. I am lured, decoyed, cheated, and accused! Go thou and take the kingdom, and fulfil the dreaded predictions of seer and prophet. Woe to Granada! Woe to the Alhambra, for it will fall! And lastly, woe to Muley Aben Hassan!"

The old king covered his convulsed face with his shaking hands, and suffered the inexpressible throes of expiring supremacy and the ineffable regret of departing glory.

Leoline threw herself at his feet, but he coldly repulsed her, even refusing to look at her. Her brother tenderly raised and embraced her, then, placing her hand in Sir Raoul Mornay's, said:

"The day after I am proclaimed King of Granada, thou shalt wed her!"

"Then," answered Mornay, in a voice scarcely audible, "that happy day will be to-morrow; for, ere this hour, thou hast been proclaimed King of Granada at the Alhambra!"

Leoline, affected beyond measure, would have fallen, had not the Knight of the Red Cross prevented her by the timely support of his arm. To spare her burning blushes, Salome, in a friendly manner interposed.

Just then Hassan's eyes fell on the crouching form of Sadoc, who, with the chain on his wrist, sat on a cushion, near a blazing fire, with soothing appliances upon his wounded feet.

"Ha! ha! old man!" he sneered. "Thou hast escaped the poisoned dagger!"

"But Hamet has not!" retorted the Jew. "You may find him dead not an hour's ride from hence. Wily and heathen king, thou hast not craft enough to cope with Sadoc, the Jew!"

"Miserable Israelite, next time thou essayest to betray the stranger within thy gates for gold, make thy bargain at a distance, and in a safe place; for the traitor is ever held in scorn, even by him who treats with him. Thou hast come off too easily, most cringing, and creeping, and crafty Hebrew! Thou shouldst have tasted the dagger or the rack. Ah, better to have spared a dozen such servile dogs as thee, than one faithful Hamet. Alas, my Hamet! Alas, my brave Hamet!"

Sadoc laughed like a raven.

"Have I touched thee there, king? Does it not affect thee that I am a witness of your downfall? Exult not over me, oh mine enemy! My sin has been grievous. But I was urged on partly by avarice, and somewhat by paternal tenderness; for I perceived that the heart of my child was in danger of being beguiled by the fugitive prince. I thought to separate them for ever by this base betrayal. But I do repent me in sackcloth and in ashes. I do desire that I may sit in lonely places, and eat the bread of bitterness, drink the waters of affliction, and weep over my transgressions."

The voice of the Jew was touchingly mournful.

"I forgive thee, oh my father!" cried Salome.

"Here is a scene," mocked Hassan, "for one of those maudlin tragedies that are sometimes enacted by men and woman on the mimic stage. Son Boabdil,

thou wilt doubtless exalt this tender Jewess to thy throne! Perhaps it will take away thy name of Unlucky! Her worthy father, perchance, has some store of gold with which to commence kinging it over Granada."

"Enough," screamed Sadoc, springing to his wounded feet, "to buy thy throne and thy kingdom! Ay, enough to levy armies and wage a war of extermination against the accursed Moor! Gold!" he repeated, throwing up his arms in wild exultation. "I have heaps of it; more than thou couldst count during the remaining years of thy life, though thou countest night and day. Ha! ha! ha!" Sadoc laughed like a madman. "It is hers, hers!" he shrieked, pointing to Salome. "Dost thou talk of thrones, old man? Not a queen in the world brought ever so rich a dowry to her lord as she shall bring to thy son, if he will but accept her!"

"Father! father!" murmured Salome, in a fainting voice.

Boabdil hurried forward and threw himself at her feet.

"I entreat, oh Sadoc," he cried, with eloquent earnestness, "this treasure without the other. Give me thy daughter, and thy gift shall make me happier than the crown I am going to the Alhambra to assume."

"Thou hast her! Thou hast her! I give her to thee in the name of the God of Israel. Meddle not with her faith, I charge thee! Were it not that I have good hopes of thy own enlightenment, this thing might not be. But she is such an angel, her life is so pure, her modesty so great, and her wisdom so penetrating, that no heresy can long withstand her influence. She loves thee! Ay, she loves thee!"

"Press her not, brother, press her not! Seest thou not that thou art answered in her blushing face? Damsels love not to say *Yes*," interposed Leoline, raising her brother, and kissing Salome upon both cheeks.

"By the sword of Omar!" muttered Hassan, biting his lips in wrath. "Here is the unmaking and making of kings and queens before my eyes!"

"Thou hast a queen," said Ahab, quietly, "that is not always a queen, especially when she visits prisoned knight, and entreats him to fly from captive thrall, for the sake of pure love!"

Sir Raoul gave Ahab a rebuking glance.

Hassan's face grew of a dark purple.

"Prisoners escape not of themselves, great Abaddon," added Ahab, disregarding the warnings of his master, "and racks do not always drag joints asunder when the fair youth, Zegrin, is present."

"Peace, Ahab, peace!" admonished Moray.

Hassan looked from one to the other, and the mortifying conviction of Zoroya's treachery came upon him with irresistible force.

The Jew, detecting the torture he was suffering, gave him a bitter taunt.

Instantly Hassan sprang upon him, snatched the poisoned dagger from his breast, the peculiar hilt of which was visible beneath his doublet, and before anyone could interfere, plunged it into Sadoc's throat, and was about to turn it against himself, when Sir Raoul caught his arm, and the deadly weapon fell ringing upon the stone floor.

"Die, dog!" hissed Hassan. "That blow is for Hamet!"

Ahab picked up the dagger, cast it into the fire, and said:

"It was so written; and it is all the same."

"Salome," said Sadoc, faintly, when Boabdil had placed him upon a couch, "come hither. Let me gaze upon thy face once more. Thou art like thy mother, whom I shall soon see."

He laid his hand on her head, then casting his eyes upon Hassan, with wonderful calmness, said:

"I thank thee, oh, king, for the blow thou hast struck for Hamet. Life for life is but just. In dying I feel myself a man. My better nature has too long been imprisoned in this shrivelled flesh. I see clearly wherein hath been my sin and my blindness. May Abraham take the persecuted Hebrew to his bosom. Salome, give me thine hand. Where is he who is to be thy lord and husband? I would have also his hand."

He paused, and for a moment there was a sound of low sobbing.

"Salome, in the casket thou knowest of, thou wilt find, as I have before informed thee, a full inventory of all my treasures, which will soon be thine. It will more than suffice for thee till we meet in heaven. Do not forget the destitute of earth, as I have done. My child, dost thou really and truly forgive me?"

"Most really and most truly!" sobbed Salome.

"Then may the blessing of God for ever rest upon thee! Boabdil, where art thou?"

"I am here," answered the prince, with emotion.

"Join hands with my Salome. Swear by the God of the Hebrews and by the Allah of the Moor that thou wilt never leave nor forsake her, that thou

will cleave unto her as to thine own soul as long as life shall last."

"I swear!" murmured Boabdil, in a subdued voice.

"So may it be! I die in peace, in the faith of my fathers!"

Sadoc, the Jew, turned a little upon his side, looked with ineffable tenderness at Salome, and gently expired.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ABEN HASSAN was confined in one of the stone chambers, and the faithful old Ali made his custodian. Sadoc's castle became at once the scene of unusual action and interest.

"Some trusty cavaliers are needed," said Moray, an hour after the foregoing scene. "You should take possession of the Alhambra this very night."

"Those trusty cavaliers," answered Boabdil, taking a package from his bosom, "are now on their way to an appointed rendezvous. I have powerful friends who have been working zealously; and I am credibly informed and well assured by these letters that there is a strong party in my favour at Granada. The popular feeling hums the turn of the tide, and, by the will of Allah, to-morrow morning I will sit on the throne of my father."

"It is well. I am glad that your highness has neglected nothing that can conduce to success, for the hour is most auspicious," said Moray.

"I am afraid," said Ahab, with his customary familiarity, "that I shall not witness that frightful passage-at-arms that was to take place on your return from the Alhambra, my master. King or otherwise, I would not, were I in your place, let him off; for I have no doubt but a great deal of fine sport might be had in tilting at each other with spears, and that you would make a merry ringing if it should come to the matter of little axes."

"It is not written, I think!" replied Sir Raoul, smiling.

"Then it can never happen; although it appears there has been a page or two scratched over about you marrying a princess, and returning in great glory to Spain; also that one Ahab the Witty will stick to your lordship while water runs and wood grows; moreover, that another, Nicolette the Pretty, will eventually pair off with this same Ahab the Witty. But it is all the same!"

"Your faithfulness, my good Ahab, exceeds all praise, and I shall be most happy to retain your services, whether here or elsewhere. Of the two, I like your wit better than your heels, although when we first met, I was of a different mind. Whatever good has happened to me of late, you have had a helping hand in; and if Nicolette be not sensible of your merits, none will regret it more than I."

"I think, your lordship, though she may not be quite as handsome as the princess, she will do well enough for me. But I am in too hurry. I can wait a year or two, or half a dozen years, at a pinch, and live through it, provided it be not otherwise decreed. You see that a man can no more marry till it is written than he can lift himself by the tops of his boots. Marrying is like death, which cannot happen till the time comes. Yet none of these things disturb me. My love is of that patient kind that can endure postponements and delays as well as a camel can travel without water on the desert. Sooner or later, the thing will come; and with God's help I will bear it as if I had no more wit than a common Moor."

"Your invaluable servant," observed Boabdil, with a smile, "will never make himself miserable for black eyes; and it will be a stormy day that brings a cloud upon his brow or his heart. I shall not forget that I also owe him a debt that never can be cancelled and wiped out of our common accounts by either kindness or rewards."

"Your highness," answered Ahab, bowing, "I have paid myself by appropriating one of the family jewels, which stands me just five thousand pistoles." He held up the diamond ring which he had received from Hassan.

"I, too," said Moray, gratefully, taking the hand of the prince, "have one of the royal jewels, and the most precious and the brightest that ever graced the throne of a monarch; and that jewel is the princess Leoline, whom I have received, this day, from your munificent hand. Boabdil, King of Granada, permit me to be the first to acknowledge your sovereignty, and salute you as a dutiful subject."

The Knight of the Red Cross, before Boabdil could prevent him, dropped gracefully on one knee and kissed his hand.

"Nay," remonstrated the prince, "this may not be! But here is one approaching, whose land any knight would be glad to salute. My first command is, that you now pay that homage to my sister."

It was Leoline, who at that moment entered the apartment, to whom Boabdil's first command referred,

and never was the mandate of prince obeyed more willingly.

"She may be a jewel of great purity, but not easily converted into pistoles," said Ahab, with speculative eye.

"Never, lady," whispered the Knight of the Red Cross to Leoline, "did I know the full taste of happiness till to-day! Let thy brother repair to the Alhambra to a throne; but I care not for thrones and crowns in this hour of my bliss as banishes that I could walk over without seeing or coveting. All is arranged. Boabdil, this night, with a chosen band, will quietly enter the Alhambra, where he will be received with acclamations and without bloodshed. I rejoice in his great good fortune; but, lady fair, I envy him not. Thou, sweet mistress, fillest every desire, satisfiest every ambition, except the ambition of being worthy of thee."

Leoline, with a charming blush, accepted the proffered arm of Sir Raoul, and they walked together in Sadoc's hall, with murmured words of content, even as they afterward walked through life together.

That night, Boabdil took quiet possession of the Alhambra, and on the following day, was proclaimed, by proper heralds, King of Granada.

Salome, after the expiration of her days of mourning, accepted him and his fate, and the vast riches left by her father long helped to uphold his throne.

He was sometimes called an apostate by factions Musselmans, but whether he was really converted to the faith of his sultans, history furnishes no certain knowledge.

El Zagal became a firm friend and supporter of the new sovereign, and was present at the magnificent bridal of Sir Raoul and Leoline.

Aben-Hassan spent the remainder of his days in moody retirement.

The anomalous youth, Zegrin, or in plainer words, Zoroya, Boabdil's most dangerous enemy, fled the Alhambra, and whether she shared the changed fortunes of the fallen king, or sought consolation elsewhere, we cannot say.

Sir Raoul Moray took his beautiful bride to the Court of Ferdinand and Isabella, where her wonderful perfections of mind and person were celebrated by poets and minstrels, and made many hearts beat fast under doublet of silver and breastplate of steel.

THE END.

NATIONAL GALLERY.—The trustees of the National Gallery have just secured, at the price of £3,400, a picture by Vittore Carpaccio, representing the Virgin and Child, with the Doge Giovanni Mocenigo kneeling before them, and holding in his right hand the banner of the Venetian Republic. On the right-hand side, looking towards the picture, is St. John, and on the left St. Christopher, carrying the Saviour. The figures are life-size, and the picture comes to us direct from the gallery of Count Alvise Mocenigo, of Venice.

We cannot imagine any more heartless trifling with the hopes and feelings of brave men than first to confer a boon and then recklessly to withdraw it, after a lapse of years, on some shallow and insufficient excuse. An act of this nature has just been perpetrated by the War Office in coolly intimating to the 75th Regiment that the year's service granted for Lucknow is rescinded, having been originally granted through "misconception." Let us hope that the 32nd which was demoralized in Lucknow when the 75th came to its relief, may not be similarly treated.

A PRACTICAL JURY.—At an industrial exhibition recently held at Yverne (Isère) a variety of artificial legs, constructed on an entirely new principle, were exposed to view. The juryman whose duty it was to decide on the comparative merits of the instruments, were much perplexed. At last they betought them of assembling half a dozen Crimean and Mexican amputees and starting them over a half-mile course equipped with the rival legs. The prize is stated to have been won by an *isacalide*, both of whose legs were taken off at the knee, but who, nevertheless, went over the distance in nine minutes.

INTERESTING ANTIQUARIAN RELIC.—A few days since, as some men in the employment of Mr. Holt, railway contractor, were excavating in the Castle Bailey, at Clare, in Suffolk, near to the entrance to the railway station, they turned up one of the most interesting relics yet found in that vicinity. It is a gold cross, attached to about two feet of ornamental gold chain. The cross is about an inch and a half long, with a large pearl at each intersection of the upright and transverse pieces. On the upper side of the cross is a representation of the Saviour, as crucified, with the glory and the crown of thorns about his head. On the scroll over him are the letters I.N.R.I., for "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." The same letters, apparently in Lombardic characters, occur one on each limb of the cross. When a small pin is removed, a portion of the upper side of the cross may be taken

off; in the cavity is a small piece of wood and a minute fragment of granite. Very probably the wood is a supposed fragment of the "true cross," and the pebble a memorial from some sacred locality in the Holy Land. In the year 1878, Philippa, Countess of March, bequeathed to Edmond, her son, a piece of the true cross, which she charges him to her blessing to keep. This Edmond, Lord of Clare, also bequeathed to Wymore Abbey, "a cross of gold set with stones, with a reliquie of the true cross." In many ancient wills similar bequests are met with. The cross and the chain thus found at Clare are in an excellent state of preservation.

CAB REGULATION IN PARIS.—All the Paris cabs are now provided with one of those instruments which show the distance travelled by the cab in the course of the day and the time occupied in each journey. The object of this instrument is to protect the cab company against fraud on the part of the cabman; but if it works well it ought also to protect the public against extortion. Such instruments, however, were known years since in this country, but have never yet come to anything here. The one in Paris may be a new and improved one.

SCIENCE.

ILLUMINATING GAS FROM APPLES.—A new use for the marc from the cider-presses has been discovered by M. Gouverneur, Butler, and Eichelbrenner, who submit it to dry distillation, and so obtain acetic acid, tar, and a large amount of gas of fair illuminating power.

USE OF ULTRAMARINE IN REFINED SUGAR.—M. Monier writes to *Les Mondes* that the use of indigo has long been given up, and ultramarine is now employed. For a boiling of 800 leaves, weighing on the average 10 kilogrammes each, about 40 grammes of ultramarine is sufficient. This quantity, which gives about six centigrammes to a loaf, is enough to communicate the very slight blue tint required. Ultramarine is perfectly innocuous.

If we reckon in the state of rest fifteen respirations per minute, and for each thirty-one cubic inches of air, and in the expired air, five per cent. of carbonic acid, and fifteen per cent. of oxygen, we easily find that a man produces in twenty-four hours, nineteen cubic feet of carbonic acid, consuming at the same time 380 cubic feet of air. These numbers may be regarded as the minima of production of carbonic acid and consumption of air. With eighteen respirations the consumption of oxygen already rises by one-fifth.

EXPERIMENTS ON THE STRETCHING OF SOLIDS. showed, in the case of metals, a decrease of temperature when the stretching weight was applied, and a heating effect when the weight was removed. An iron wire of 25 of an inch in diameter was cooled, 125 of a degree Cent. when stretched by a weight of 775 lb. In the case of india-rubber it was suggested that this substance stretched by a weight is shortened by increase of temperature. On trial it was found that india-rubber when stretched by a weight capable of doubling its length, has that length diminished by one-tenth when its temperature is raised 50 degrees Cent.

A VERY ingenious instrument for obtaining the accurate soundings of deep water has been devised by M. Hérouin, of Lyons. The difficulty which presents itself in the case of the apparatus at present employed is to ascertain the exact moment at which the lead touches the bottom. This obstacle is removed by M. Hérouin's invention. In his contrivance the sounding-line is a light telegraph cable inclosing two perfectly insulated wires, both connected at one extremity with the lead, and at the other with the two poles of a galvanic battery. The lead is so arranged that on touching the bottom contact is made between the ends of the two wires; thus a current is established, and this, by ringing a bell placed in connection with the battery, announces the exact moment at which the lead touches the sea-bottom.

FOREIGN AND COLONIAL JOTTINGS.—A proposal to convey the Great Indian Peninsula Railway through the native town of Bombay on a raised level is under consideration by the municipality and government. A terrific collision between two goods trains has occurred on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, about twenty-five miles from Bombay, by which one of the trains was set on fire, and its freight totally consumed. One man was burned to death, another killed, and three others severely injured. The Central Argentine Railway is now completed to the thirty-sixth mile from the port of Rosario, and it was thought sixty-six miles would be laid by Christmas, and a hundred and twenty miles to Enryle Muerto, or half way to Cordova, by the 1st of July next. The line is being constructed with Griffin's sleepers, and its smoothness is strongly spoken of. A prospectus has been issued

of the Anglo-Danish and Baltic Steam Navigation Company, with a capital of £200,000, in shares of £10, to take over the vessels of the Danish General Steam Navigation Company of Denmark, and of Messrs. Kock and Henderson, of Copenhagen. An ironfoundry and works for the repair of steam machinery has been erected at Gibraltar.

A NOTE ON THE MANUFACTURE OF MARBLED PAPER.

THE premises in which this work is executed are of considerable extent, and present a very picturesque appearance. The space needed for drying the paper, and for the various operations of staining, prevents the overcrowding of the workpeople, who, for the most part, are youths, and very young boys.

On reaching one apartment, there are to be noticed quantities of paper made of the usual widths of wall-papers, and in pieces which are of the length of about twelve yards.

In some instances the paper is tinted so as to form a groundwork for the grain of the material which is needed to be imitated.

Near the entrance of the room there is a tank several feet in length, and of a width sufficient to admit a breadth of wall-paper. In this tank there is water to the depth of from two to three inches, and at the bottom there is a heavy white deposit, which, even after the water has been disturbed, sinks rapidly back to the bottom.

Close at hand are pots which contain various colours, prepared with turpentine and oil, in which are brushes of a suitable form.

When the surface of the water in the tank is still, the artist who superintends this department of the work, and who is now about producing imitations of marble, takes the various pigments, and as though he were painting on a more solid surface, he marks the veins of the marble on the still surface of the water in various colours; and it is curious to see how the different forms and colours deposited—which, we should think, but for the gathering-up effect of the next process, form one of the faintest of all pictorial effects—assume the exact appearance of marble, granite, or other of the very hardest of the earth's substances, the artist working on water in somewhat the same way as if he were engaged on wood.

As he goes on, the colours rise to the surface, and he soon completes a remarkably truthful and clever picture of a slab of the kind of marble mentioned. The light upon the water gives a bright and peculiar glaze, and the white deposit at the bottom of the tank adds to the effect.

During the process, the artist clears part of the surface by a deposition of turpentine, acids, or other means, which are magical in their effect, and give an air of verisimilitude and refinement to the picture.

HOW IT OUGHT (?) TO BE TAUGHT THAT FAT IS FORMED IN THE BODY.—Let him teach that the hydrogens are generated to a large amount, in the system from the fat taken, and consequently absorb oxygen freely, the natural results being aqueous elements, which become inspissated, and fatty deposits are the result. When there is a diminished supply of oxygen to the intestines, with a full supply of hydrogen, then greater quantities of fat necessarily ensue. But let them give up the idea that cutting fat itself, or fat-producing elements, supply fat *per se*, for they do no such thing. This can only be done in the way I have previously said, by their conversion into hydrogens, and then combining with oxygen; and if this is not done many persons, to my own knowledge, who are great consumers of fat, never made fat nor carried fat themselves in any like proportion.

TESTING ARMOUR-PLATES.—A new method of testing experimental and simple armour-plates is about to be adopted by the Admiralty, and for which purpose the Thunderer target-ship is being prepared. In all previous trials of armour-plates at Portsmouth, whether for ships or forts, the conditions have been a distance of 200 yards from the muzzle of the gun to the armour-plate, with the latter bolted on to the side of some old wooden frigate moored for the purpose in the upper waters of Portsmouth harbour, and the gun mounted on the deck of a gunboat. With the Thunderer the conditions are entirely altered, both gun and plate being mounted on board the ship at only 25 ft. distance from each other. To attain this object the Thunderer has been cut down to her lower deck overboard beams, and 25 ft. space of the lower deck converted into an iron-lined roofless room or proof house, one end of the room being formed by a timber-built bulkhead of immense strength, on which are bolted the armour-plates under trial, and the other end by armour-plated bulkhead with port-holes for four guns. The guns are laid at any particular part of the armour-plate required, and fired by means of a voltaic battery from below. Of the plates now ordered for trial one is for the iron-cased hydraulic vessel Waterwitch, a vessel building for

the Admiralty by the Thames Ironworks and Ship-building Company. This vessel is remarkable as having been designed on a plan expected to supersede all other steam vessels, screw or paddle, by proving the practicability of propelling vessels by sucking in a column, or "rope" of water, by a turbine wheel arrangement through the ship's bottom and squirting it again out of the ship through her sides. It is feared that, whatever results may be obtained, they will be rendered unimportant by the excessive cost of their production. The plate for this ship's armour is $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick.

PREPARATION OF IODIDE OF POTASSIUM.—Fuchs places 100 parts of iodine in a porcelain dish with 200 parts of distilled water, and adds thereto 75 parts of pure carbonate of potash, and 80 parts of iron filings. The mixture is well stirred together, and allowed to stand. The action proceeds slowly by itself, but is hastened by the application of heat. When the evolution of carbonic acid has ceased, the mixture is evaporated to dryness with continual stirring. It is better to allow the mixture to stand for some time in a lukewarm drying oven until all the iron is peroxidized, and then evaporate to dryness. The dried mass is then placed in an iron vessel, and heated to a dull redness. The residue is then extracted with the smallest quantity of distilled water; the solution, which has usually an alkaline reaction, is then saturated with hydriodic acid, and set aside to crystallize.

PETROLEUM.—According to analyses by French chemists, the petroleum oils in the condition they are received in that country from America, have a density of 800 deg. This oil gives 20 per cent. of volatile oil of 750 deg.; 60 per cent. of lamp oil, at 800 deg.; and 20 per cent. of heavy fat oil, at 850 deg. The lamp oils of 800 deg., intended for burning, are sold in commerce at 80 francs the hectolitre of 80 kilogrammes, or 100 francs the 100 kilogrammes. The volatile oils of 750 deg. sell at 40 francs per 100 kilogrammes. The heavy oils of 850 deg. sell at 45 francs the 100 kilogrammes. The pure lamp oils of 800 deg. are clear, and not explosive, but some merchants are in the habit of mixing a part of the light oil of 750 deg. with the heavy oil of 850 deg., in such proportions that a compound oil of 800 deg. is obtained. This practice is doubly injurious to the consumer, because the mixed oil is highly dangerous and explosive, and burns away faster than the genuine lamp oil, without giving more light.

GREAT progress has of late been made in the construction of what is known at Hull as the South-bridge. The bridge will, it is said, have the largest opening of any swing-bridge in England, namely, 120 ft., or between the centres of the pillars, 120 ft., which will allow a clear water-way of 100 ft. It rests upon a foundation of brick and stone, which is situated on the garrison side, and when it is remembered that the total weight of iron sustained by this foundation is about 800 tons, it will be seen to require a support of considerable strength—a requisite which has been successfully supplied. The entire length of the bridge will be 220 ft., of which the swinging part is 170 ft. The width is 36 ft., which allows a clear road between the massive girders for heavy traffic of 23 ft., and a foot path on each side 5 ft. in breadth, and outside the girders. The girders are highest towards the garrison side, descending gradually towards the other end. On the town side the bridge rests on two iron cylinders 6 ft. in diameter, filled with concrete, and sunk to a depth of 60 ft. The ironwork is the manufacture of Henry Grissell, Regent Canal Ironworks, City-road, London. Mr. Allen has been the resident engineer of the works, which have been carried on, under the superintendence of Mr. R. O. France. The bridge, it is said, will be open for public traffic in the course of about three months.

VACCINATION.—Dr. Spencer Hall has been fined 15s. by the magistrates at Bournemouth, in Westmoreland, for refusing to have his child vaccinated. He has arrived at a profound conviction that very extensive syphilis as well as scrofulous and other morbid taints prevailed, not merely in England, but throughout Europe, so that any matter conveyed by inoculation—perhaps through a hundred persons, of the history of many of whom they could know but little, made the purity of the lymph, as ordinarily used, open to considerable doubt. Even when from the cow at all, the particle first taken was very minute, and in the course of its passage through a hundred subjects must, to form any bulk at all, have taken up much other matter by the way. But to get the genuine vaccine lymph at all was very rare. He had talked with many old and experienced farmers who had never seen the genuine pox in a cow. He had heard only of one case, and that was from an authorised cattle inspector, who had seen it in Edinburgh; but in that one case it was complicated with the rinderpest. He had suffered in his own person from vaccination; others who were near and dear to him had

done the same, and afterwards, in his own case, he had the small-pox so severely that he had but narrowly escaped with life. At the same time, if he could even meet with an instance of genuine cow-pox in the animal after the riderpest should have disappeared, he would then feel it his duty to vaccinate the child.

FACETIE.

DEATH comes to a good man to relieve him; it comes to a bad one to relieve society.

AN Irish guide told a tourist, who wished a reason why echo was always of the feminine gender, "That it was because she always had the last word."

WHY is it complimentary to call a man a "son of a gun?"—Because it is well known that no gun is good for anything unless it descends in a straight line from a good stock.

A COMPANY boring for oil in Kansas have struck a fluid which looks like milk, which puzzles them greatly. They have been unable, thus far, to churn it into butter.

A DUBLIN journal observes, that a handbill announcement of a political meeting in that city states, with boundless liberality, that "the ladies, without distinction of sex, are cordially invited to attend."

REASONS FOR NOT JOINING THE CHURCH.

Two lawyers were returning from court when the one said to the other:

"I've a notion to join Rev. Mr. —'s church—been debating the matter for some time. What do you think of it?"

"Wouldn't do it," said the other.

"Well, why?"

"Because it could do you no possible good, while it might be a great injury to the church."

GEORGE I, when he landed in England, said to some of the crowd assembled, "I come for your goods," (meaning for your welfare), and one of the crowd replied (alluding to the good things the Germans would pick up), "Ay, and chattels, too, I expect."

BIRDS FROM SEED.—"Are those pure canaries?" asked a gentleman of a bird dealer with whom he was negotiating for a "gift for his fair."—"Yes, sir," said the dealer, confidentially, "I raised them 'ere birds from canary seed!"

"Rose, my dear," said a mother to her daughter, "if you are so cold and reserved you will never get a husband."—"Ma," retorted the young lady, "unless the poets tell fibs, a primrose is not without attractions."

WE have blue books, the French have yellow books, the Italians have just chosen green for their colour. The Americans have chosen black. Doubtless, like our own colour, the black covers a heavy grievance.

"JEANNIE," said a Scotchman to his daughter, who was asking his consent to accompany her urgent and favoured suitor to the altar: "Jeannie, it's a very solemn thing to get married."—"I know it, father," replied the sensible damsel, "but it's a solemn thing not to."

A GIRL forced by her parents into a disagreeable match with an old man, whom she detested, when the clergyman came to that part of the service where the bride is asked if she consents to take the bridegroom for her husband, said, with great simplicity: "Oh, dear, no, sir; but you are the first person who has asked my opinion about the matter."

FRIENDSHIP.—"That's a stupid brute of yours, John," said a Scotch minister to his parishioner, the peat-dealer, who drove his merchandise from door to door in a small cart drawn by a donkey; "I never see you but the creature is braying." "Ah, sir," said the peat-dealer, "ye ken the heart's warm when frien's meet."

A COUNTRYMAN purchased some meal at the store of a jocosite trader the other day, which was put into bags, and as it was not convenient to take it away at once, left it in the store till morning. In the morning he called, and finding that the rats had gnawed sundry holes and abstracted some of the contents of the bags, he asked for an abatement of the price. "Oh, no, sir," said the trader, "I can't think of that, because the bargain was made last night, and according to your own account, has since been ratified."

THE DUKE and the DONKEY.—The Duke of Portland occupies his time chiefly in superintending the formation of an extensive ornamental lake on his estate of Welbeck, in "The Dukeries," and has caused hundreds of acres of fertile land to be submerged. His grace, who is said to be very "eccentric," is his own clerk of the works, and superintends the labourers, who ride to and from Welbeck on don-

keys, which, during working hours, are turned into "the home park." For this privilege the duke has imposed a charge of 8s. a month per donkey, because one of those usually stupid animals has taken an antipathy to his grace, and runs at him, open mouthed, whenever he passes the herd, and drives him off his own estate.

IF Fenian Stephens should be in Paris his modesty keeps him in the background, since he has made no public demonstration of his presence there. But if some uncertainty should hang over this important event, none can disturb the certitude of possessing another individual of the same genus. Mr. Barnum has arrived from America, and is at this moment great amongst the great men at the Grand Hotel. It is observed that every American who comes there is either a General or a Brigadier. An Englishman threw his stick at a Newfoundland dog the other day, missed him; but accidentally hit five Yankee Major-Generals, to whom he courteously apologised.

"ALLOW ME TO TAKE CARE OF THE BABY."

(Clown in the Pantomime.)

Nurse Russell, Nurse Russell, beware of the day When Britannia shall meet thee in hostile array, To put thee to question, as sulky as may be, And with black looks inquire, "What you've done with the Baby?"

Oh think how the answer, rash Nurse, would go down.

"Please, Marim, I gave Baby to nurse to the Clown!"

Who but knows to what fate the poor Baby is doomed,

Whose care by that rough nurse, the Clown, is assumed.

How 'tis first coaxed and petted, then scolded and slapped:

How its poor little head on the hard boards is rapped:

With what horrors its poor little stomach is crammed,

Down its throat with the coarsest of feeding-spoons rammed.

How with rough scrubbing-brushes and blacking 'tis polished;

How its features are spuezed and its frocks are demolished;

How from dandling Clown soon comes to dancing upon it,

Till, last scene of all, like its nurse's crushed bonnet,

Squeezed flat as a pancake 'twixt Clown and his chair

Head foremost 'tis recklessly chucked in the air.

Then let's pray for a speedy deliverance from ill, For Nurse Russell, and eke for her poor little Bill.

The babe may be threatened by rad and by rough, If it's weak, and don't go what they call far enough;

But if once handed over to Clown by its nurse, It perhaps may go farther, but sure 'twill fare worse.

Punch.

A YOUNG lady, who had been severely interrogated in court by an ill-tempered counsel, observed, on leaving the witness-box, that she never before fully understood what was meant by cross-examination.

A PERSON in Paris noticed a poor man with a wooden leg walking past his hotel, and gave him a franc. The next day he saw the supposed beggar, but he had changed the wooden leg from the right to the left. Enraged at the deception, he went up to the man, and exclaimed: "You rascal, you had the wooden leg on the other side yesterday. You are not lame at all!" "Monsieur," was the response, with dignity, "I never said I was. I wear a wooden leg for economy, so as not to wear out my trousers, and I change the leg to prevent one leg of the trousers wearing out before the other."

A GENTLE HINT.—At a concert which took place recently, a gentleman in the audience rose up just as the third piece on the programme had been performed, and said: "Mr. Conductor, will you oblige me, sir, by requesting your vocalists either to sing louder or to sing in whispers, as there is a conversation going on close by where I sit, that is conducted in such a loud tone as to hinder my enjoyment of the music? I prefer certainly to hear the concert; but if I cannot be so privileged, I desire to hear the conversation." There was an extremely quiet and attentive audience in the hall during the rest of the evening.

A SILENT MEMBER.—At Litchfield Lord Alfred Paget, alluding to his being a silent member of the House of Commons said, "He spoke once or twice on subjects on which he felt strongly; but he would let them into a secret of the Treasury Bench, and that was

if he, as connected with the Government, but not in any department of it, were to get up to speak they would all turn round, look up, and say, 'Lord bless my soul, what's Alfred Paget going to say!'—(Loud laughter.) Unless they were in some department, the Colonial, the War Office, the Treasury, or the Admiralty, they must be very careful of what they said, otherwise they put the whole Treasury Bench into a state of collapse."—(Laughter and cheers.)

VERY CURIOUS COINCIDENCE.—Attention has lately been attracted to the extraordinary height of the barometer. Had this phenomenon any connection with the high price of butchers' meat?—Punch.

A TREASURE OF A HOUSEMAID.

Master: "Mary, have you seen a letter in a pink envelope, that was lying about on the shelf a day or two ago?"

Maid: "Letter in pink envelope, sir? Let me see—was it about Mr. and Mrs. Samuel F. Johnson a requestin' the pleasure of your company and missus to dinner next Tuesday week at a quarter to eight?"

Master (aghast): "Ye-es, it was!"

Maid: "Then it's under the clock, sir."—Punch.

THE GALE FAMILY.—By an advertisement in the Times, inquiry is made for the next of kin of Mr. Breeze. Can it be that this Breeze died away and left no heir?—Punch.

THE new bill about London Traffic is good, as far as it goes, but the regulations will have to be much more stringent. What's the use of excluding vehicles drawn by six horses? It is the Van, drawn by two, and the Van-demon driver, that must be expelled. Then, if all carts are driven off during the afternoon, and it is ordained that everything shall make way for a swell in a Hansom, I may occasionally go to my office, viz the Strand and Fleet Street, instead of by an underground tunnel from Grosvenor Square. As for the proposed bridges, do you think that the women will use them? How can they, while Mantalini regins?—Punch.

FIRE!

A NEW fire-annihilator has been invented, which bears the name of L'Extincteur. Its merits were tested the other day in the presence of the Duke of Wellington and other people of distinction—we were nearly saying extinction. At the end of the trial, says the report we quote:

"In order to test the innocuous nature of the contents of the little engine, his Grace and several of the company testified to the same by drinking some out of a glass."

How delightful! We hope a large supply of the fluid will be bottled and stored in the cellars of the House of Commons. Any member likely to flare up on slight occasion might take a glass of the mixture, which although described as an extinguisher, would prevent him from getting "put out."—Fun.

THE MILLENNIUM AT LAST!—Dr. Cumming, in his last work, states that he has exhausted all he has to say or write on the fulfilment of prophecy!—Fun.

THE committee of the French Universal Exhibition has just decided that there shall be no days of admission gratis. The charge will be one franc, except on Friday, when it will be five. Persons who may wish to enter before ten in the morning will pay one franc extra. The price of season tickets will be 100 francs for men, 60 francs for women, and 20 francs for children.

ROYAL WEDDING DRESS JEWELLERY.—The jewellery from the Royal Treasury worn by the Princess Alexandrine on the evening of her wedding day was worth £225,000, and is only taken out on grand occasions and with certain formalities. The crown that the Princess's is only worn on one single occasion, that of their wedding. The necklace is composed of diamonds varying in value from £3,000 to £12,000 each. The pendant is the famous Regent or Pitt diamond, which is regarded as the most valuable of the jewels of the Prussian Crown.

SALMON FISHERY ACT, 1885.—Under the provisions of this Act it is necessary, before any fishery district can be formed, that the justices in quarter sessions assembled shall apply to the Secretary of State for the formation of a district, and the Secretary of State shall then publish notices of his intention to grant a certificate for the formation of such district; but no certificate shall be granted until the notices have appeared in the public papers for one month. After the certificate has been granted, the justices may, at the next sessions, put the Act in force. Such being the course of proceeding required by the statute, the justices at their sessions in October last, being the first sessions held after the passing of the Act, sent applications from the several counties in which it is proposed to form districts, requiring the Secretary of

State to set out the districts. The Secretary of State has acceded to these applications, but instead of the notices appearing in such time that a certificate may be granted before the next sessions, which are held in January, they did not appear till the 20th of December last, in the London paper, and consequently the certificates cannot be granted before January sessions. It will therefore be necessary, in the several counties affected by this delay, to hold an adjourned session; for if this is not done, the Act cannot be brought into operation during the next fishing season, and will be a dead letter; and all the benefits contemplated by the Legislature will be frustrated by the delay at the Home-office in the publication of the notices.

HUNGARIAN COSTUMES.—At the opening of the Hungarian Diet, by the Emperor of Austria, there was a scene of much brilliancy. The women, of an almost Oriental type of beauty, with their dark eyes, delicately pencilled eye-brows, and thick tresses of hair, under a small round hat, set with a heron's feather; the men, magnificent in black and crimson, with jewels of surpassing value, heavy sable mantles, scimitars encrusted with pearl and turquoise, laced boots with massy golden spurs, and low velvet bonnets with broad far border, aigrettes, and plume.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

WINTER FLOWERS.—Take the crown, or top of a large carrot, cutting off the crown, and leaving attached about half an inch of the carrot; place it in a saucer of water, which you may conceal with moss. The beautiful fernlike sprays of the carrot will continue green and growing for several months, and may be surrounded with exotics, to which it will lend a grace.

TO RESTORE HAIR THAT HAS FALLEN OFF THROUGH ILLNESS.—Rub onions frequently on the part requiring it. The stimulating powers of this vegetable are of service in restoring the tone of the skin, and assisting the capillary vessels in sending forth new hair; but it is not infallible; should it succeed, however, the growth of this new hair may be assisted by the oil of myrtle-berries.

A GARDENER in the department of the Nord has discovered a new mode of restoring exhausted asparagus beds. He spread during the spring 120 pounds weight of common salt over a piece of ground thirty feet long by six wide. The asparagus plants, though old and exhausted, produced a crop double what might be expected from the youngest and strongest plants. Although salt is dear in France, the gardener got a handsome profit by it. It seems that the middle of March is the best time to employ the salt.

CURING MEAT.—To one gallon of water, take one and one-half pounds of salt, one-half pound of sugar, one-half ounce of saltpetre, one-half-ounce of potash. In this ratio the pickle to be increased to any quantity desired. Let these be boiled together, until all the dirt from the sugar rises to the top and is skimmed off. Then throw it into a tub to cool, and when cold pour it over your beef or pork, to remain the usual time, say four or five weeks. The meat must be well covered with pickle, and should not be put down for at least two days after killing, during which time it should be slightly sprinkled with powdered saltpetre, which removes all the surface blood, &c., leaving the meat fresh and clean. Some omit boiling the pickle, and find it to answer well; though the operation of boiling purifies the pickle by throwing off the dirt always to be found in salt and sugar. If this recipe is properly tried, it will never be abandoned. There is none that surpasses it, if so good.

INCREASED INSPIRATION.—The following interesting results were obtained from the experiments of Dr. Edward Smith on the quantity of air inspired throughout the day and night under various influences. The total quantity of air inspired in twenty-four hours, allowance being made for intervals amounting altogether to forty minutes, during which records were not taken, was 711,060 cubic inches; or an average of 29,627 cubic inches per hour, and 493.6 per minute. The quantity was much less during the night than during the day. There was an increase as the morning advanced, and a decrease at about 8h. 30m. p.m., but most suddenly at about 11 p.m. The average depth of respiration was 26.5 cubic inches, with a minimum of 18.1 cubic inches in the night, and a maximum of 32.2 cubic inches at 1h. 30m. p.m. The mean rate of the pulse was 76 per minute. The amount of breathing was greater in the standing than in the sitting posture. It was increased by riding on horseback, according to the pace, also by riding in or on an omnibus. In railway travelling the increase was greater in a second than in a first-class carriage, and greatest in the third-class and on the engine. Bending forward whilst sitting lessened it. The quantity of inspired air was increased by exposure to the heat and light of the sun, and lessened

in darkness. When tea was taken an increase was the result; coffee caused a decrease. Supper of bread and milk also caused a decrease, but milk by itself or with suet caused an increase. An increase was obtained with the following articles of diet—viz., eggs, beef steak, jelly, white bread, oatmeal, potatoes, sugar, tea, rum. The following caused a decrease—viz., butter, fat of beef, olive oil, cod-liver oil, arrow-root, brandy, and kirchenwasser.

A SUNNY MEMORY.

A BRAVE old castle on the steep
And broken rocks, lit up with green,
And calm upon the mighty deep,
That round us spread with bluest sweep,
And slumbered in a silver sheen,
With sleepy whisperings, that seemed
As if it murmured while it dreamed.
The rugged headland, bold and free,
The Norman keep, the ruined tower,
The sky that bent so lovingly
To blend its beauty with the sea.
Rememberest thou that sunny hour,
That hour of rest when hand-in-hand
We stood upon the golden sand?
And when the moonlight touched the tide,
And washed the cliffs all silver white,
How lightly did our vessel glide,
While waves went dancing past its side,
And each was crowned with glittering light?
That hour is in the past—but yet
Its joy I never can forget.

A. G.

GEMS.

A WISE man gets learning from those who have none themselves.

A LIFE of leisure and a life of laziness are two things.

FOR age and want save while you may;
No morning sun lasts a whole day.

HE who repeats the ill he hears of another is the true slanderer.

THE most common disguise of envy is in the praise of what is subordinate.

STATISTICS.

THE ORANGE TRADE.—Oranges are imported in boxes containing 250 and more, and in chests holding 500 to 1,000. The quantity of this fruit imported has been steadily increasing for some years past. In the three years ending with 1842, the average imports were 334,070 boxes; in the five years ending with 1850, they had increased to 380,000 boxes. Since then the quantity has been computed in bushels. The average annual imports in the five years ending with 1860 were 974,400 bushels. The quantity taken for consumption has now reached upwards of 1,000,000 bushels, and assuming each bushel to contain 650, this would give 650,000,000 of oranges, or about 22 for each soul of the population in the kingdom. The Azores, or Western Islands, from whence the finest or St. Michael oranges come, furnish us with the largest supply, more than a half of the whole imports. The expense of walling and planting an acre of orange garden is stated to be about 15*l.* for the wall, 8*l.* for 65 trees, and 2*l.* for labour. It yields half a crop of beans or Indian corn during seven years, but no oranges; from eight to eleven years half a crop of oranges is obtained. Afterwards a full crop is obtained, which is sold for 10*l.* to 15*l.* Each tree on arriving at maturity will produce annually on an average 12,000 to 16,000 oranges; one grower is said to have picked 26,000 from a single tree. The trees bloom in March or April, and oranges are gathered for the London market as early as November. The Portuguese never eat them before the end of January, at which time they possess their full flavour. In the season of 1851, which produced by no means an unusually large crop, not less than 355 cargoes of oranges, containing about 280,000 large boxes, holding 800 oranges each, were shipped from the Western Islands. Payal formerly exported a great many oranges, but the insect pest, which appeared in 1840, in a few years killed all the trees there. Terceira annually exports about thirty cargoes, and St. Mary a few cargoes; but St. Michael's is the great mart. In 1801 the value of the fruit imported from thence was but 14,000*l.*; in 1850, 65,000*l.*; and in 1859, 84,123*l.* It was estimated that the produce of fruit in this island during 1859 was 252,900,000 of oranges and 40,000 lemons; of these, all the lemons and 49,000,000 oranges were consumed on the island.

The export of oranges from St. Michael was 179,379 boxes in 1852; 123,327 boxes in 1855-6; 100,079 in 1856-7; 179,922 in 1857-8; and 130,859 boxes in 1858-9. The trade has been suffering for several years from severe depression, owing to the low price obtained for the fruit in England. In the season 1858-9 the growers obtained an average of 10*s.* 5*d.* per box, which is considered a very fair remunerative price by the proprietors of orange gardens. More than half the orange crop is shipped in the months of November and December. The value of the fruit now imported reaches nearly 600,000*l.* annually.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE Emperor Maximilian is the only ruler that has declined for years past the Christmas present of the Pope.

THE *County Chronicle*, a newspaper published in Jamaica, is now issued without any leading articles, on account of the editor being in prison for treason.

Of a hundred and sixteen winning jockeys who appeared on the Continent during the past racing season, only eighteen were Frenchmen.

THE Royal trains are all now fitted with electric communications with the guard and driver from the Royal carriage.

QUEEN VICTORIA has sent one of her maids of honour to Brussels, to obtain from the Queen of the Belgians in person a detailed account of the last moments of Leopold I.

THE Viceroy of Egypt has commissioned a celebrated jeweller of Paris to make him a pair of diamond waist-buckles, the price of which is to amount to 2,000,000*l.*

It is a joke at the expense of the patriotism of the Hungarians that with all their expressions of affection to Austria they would only put down 25,000*l.* for the Austrian loan. Their affection for their florins is greater than for their ruler.

THE land wanted for the enlargement of the National Gallery has been bought of the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields for 286,000*l.* The site includes St. Martin's Workhouse, and Archbishop Tenison's library and schools.

THE late King of the Belgians was the senior officer in the army, his commission as Field-Marshal dating as far back as 1816. At one time he was colonel of the 5th (Princess Charlotte of Wales') Dragoon Guards, but resigned this, and never drew army-pay when he ascended the throne of Belgium.

HER MAJESTY will proceed from Osborne to Buckingham Palace on the 1st of February, to open the Parliament House, after which the Queen will return to Osborne, where the Court will reside until after the 10th of February, and then return to Windsor.

HER MAJESTY has been graciously pleased to appoint Mrs. Sayer, eldest daughter of Colonel the Hon. Sir Charles Phipps, K.C.B., State Housekeeper of Kensington Palace, rendered vacant by the death of Lady Augusta Gordon Hallyburton.

THE French Ambassador at St. Petersburg receives 300,000 francs a year, at London 275,000, at Madrid 150,000, at Rome 140,000, at Constantinople 140,000, at Pekin 120,000, at Berlin 110,000, and at Washington 80,000.

AMONG the many claims which the late King of the Belgians had upon the affection of the Queen was the fact that his Majesty, during the period that the Queen was a princess, and not fully provided for by a State allowance, allowed the princess an income of 26,000*l.* a-year.

THE Legislature of Victoria have found it necessary to prevent annihilation of the game by passing a Game Law quite as stringent as anything that the democratic press attributes to the aristocracy of England. Think of a penalty of 15*l.* for every partridge or pheasant taken, 10*l.* for the egg of a thrush, and 40*l.* for a nest and eggs!

LEOPOLD II. is the first Sovereign of Belgium born within the country since the great Emperor Charles V., who is well known to have been a native of Ghent, and always gloried in his birthplace. We should hardly feel the same amount of comfort were we a native of that town, which requires so much yet in the way of purification.

THE Prince of Wales, the Duke of Brabant, the Archduke Charles of Austria, the King of Portugal, the Crown Prince of Prussia, and the Duke of Ostrogothia, will be members of the foreign commission for the French Exhibition. Prince Napoleon, it is thought, will preside, and Baron de Lessopis will act as a man of colour for many Eastern places, including Morocco, China, and a model of course of the great canal.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

BARNUM.—"Humbags of the World" appeared as a series of articles in THE LONDON READER many months ago.

A. M. BYRNE and **J. CLEVELAND** are respectfully referred to our standing literary notification in this page.

LUCIAN S.—"The Serenade" is, of course, not original; and is therefore rejected.

J. SMITH.—The lines are reserved, and may possibly appear in a future number.

ANNA G.—We shall be at all times gratified to receive our correspondents' poetical favours.

EDITH.—The fourth finger of the left hand is that on which the engagement ring is usually placed.

T. W. R.—The colour of the hair is dark brown. If the second question of your note is forwarded in the usual form, we will insert it.

B. GROVE.—Both poems are declined, with thanks. The handwriting is decidedly good, and would, of course, be suitable for correspondence.

F. C. W.—If the debts were contracted for necessities, the rule is that a minor is not liable for them after attaining his majority.

A. YOUNG.—It would be advisable to consult a medical man, as there are probably circumstances in your case to which a set form of recipe would not apply.

BEIL.—The green colour of gold leaf, when seen by transmitted light, may be destroyed by subjecting the metal, extended on glass or mica, to heat as low as possible as that of boiling oil, being sufficient if continued for several hours. When pressure is applied to such discoloured gold by a convex piece of rock crystal of short radius, the green colour of the transmitted ray reappears.

ACHILLE.—You must apply to the Bandmaster, at the Horse Guards. (The handwriting is good, and the orthography also.)

J. BAKER.—There is only one course open to you, and that is to state frankly the alteration in your affections, and to return the letters.

AN OLD SHIPMASTER.—You can obtain the desired information by writing to the secretary of the institution at Deptford, who will doubtless transmit you the rules, &c.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.—The advertising columns of the daily newspapers afford intending emigrants ample information as to rates of passage and dates of sailing; or you may apply to any shipbroker.

ALEXANDER.—Nothing can be more certain than that young ladies should not accept presents from young gentlemen of short acquaintance; no lady should ever consent to receive them.

LOUISE L.—The handwriting is rather ladylike than otherwise, though susceptible of improvement; but we never undertake to predicate character from any calligraphic whatever.

A. O. wishes to correspond matrimonially with a gentleman of good principles and well educated. Is tall, dark, and handsome, and will have a large fortune when of age.

NICHOLAS.—When mercury is brought into contact with dry oxygen in which ozone has been formed by the electrical discharge, it loses to a great extent its mobility, and may be made to cover the interior of the tube with a fine reflecting surface resembling that of an ordinary mirror. This change in the mercury is not accompanied by any further diminution of the volume of the gas.

E. B. E., who is twenty-four years of age, good looking, and tall, wishes to correspond with a gentleman who is between twenty-four and thirty years of age, and tall and dark, with a view to matrimony.

ROSEAN. who is a blonde, twenty-three years of age, and considered very prepossessing, wishes to correspond, with a view to matrimony, with a gentleman well educated, in a good business, and must be of home.

FANNY AND KATE. the former of whom is twenty years of age, fair, with auburn hair; and the latter eighteen years of age, and a decided brunette, wish to correspond matrimonially with two highly respectable tradesmen.

HARMA. who is twenty-two years of age, has dark hair and eyes, is tall, considered very good looking, and amiable, is willing to correspond matrimonially with a steady young gentleman about her own age, and who must be tall and fond of home.

F. S. D., who is twenty-three years of age, fair, tall, possessing an ordinary share of good looks, and an income at present of 7000 l. a year, and will eventually have 10000 l. a year, and is of good birth, wishes to be introduced to a lady with whom he might settle down in married life. The lady must be of medium height and fair complexion (light hair

indispensable), be between sixteen and twenty-one years of age, and of good birth and station, but money no consideration.

ADAM.—The total number of visitors to the Exhibition of 1862, excluding the staff and exhibitors' attendants, was 6,117,450, or 87,000 over that of 1851. The Exhibition of 1862 was open for seventeen days longer than that of 1851. The estimated value of the articles exhibited in 1861, excluding the Koh-i-noor diamond, was 1,741,300 l. 11s. 4d. of which the United Kingdom is represented by 4,031,677 4s. 9d.

M. A. G., who is twenty-nine years of age, of business habits and home-staying tastes, is willing to correspond matrimonially with a respectable tradesman (a widower about forty years of age, without encumbrance, not objected to).

M. R. M., a widow without encumbrance, thirty-four years of age, of cheerful disposition, and having a lucrative business, would be glad to correspond with a respectable tradesman, about forty years of age, disposed towards matrimony.

A. YOUNG LADY (orphan preferred), who must have about 10000 l. and a moderate share of good looks, will find an eligible husband in a young warrior, who would wish his fiancée to reside in or near his native place, and who would be before marriage. *Card required.*

NELLIE T. P., who is nineteen years of age, of middle height, dark complexion, and amiable disposition, would like to correspond matrimonially with a dark gentleman about twenty-three years of age, fond of home, and having an income of 3000 l. a year.

EDITH HARVEY.—A young lady who, after three years' courtship, cannot ascertain whether her lover loves her, is certainly most remarkably deficient in the intuition of her sex. The doubt can only be satisfactorily solved by the gentleman "proposing."

LOST IN THE FOREST.

I wander through the never-ending gloom
Of forests vast. Methinks, too, as the wide-
The wide and stately lines of myriad trees—
Wave with the breeze, their foliage like the tide
Of some vast rushing, mighty-colling sea;
Methinks of solitude's sublimity.

Alone! Lost in the forest's depths! How awful
To see the light of heaven come slowly glancing
Through the vast sea of foliage! To hear
The roar of cataracts, like war-steeds prancing,
Vaking the solitude that reigns around!

To hear the birds of heaven their evening song
Pour forth, and know, alas! 'twere soon to-night—
Dark night! Speak to me, my soul, this drooping frame
To cheer, and chase away the fearful fright
That presses upon me like the hand of death!

Gloom to the north, and to the south, all round;
No gress from that forest wide and high—
No ending to those myriad lines of trees?
Must I, then, lay me down—lay me down to die,
And yield my soul to death, when ages are new?

Ah! what heard? Methought I heard the horns
Of the bugle-horn of hunters! Alas, 'twas but the waves
Playing their mournful symphonies, lapping,
Laving, sighing with the wind in mountain caves.
Oh, heaven! Nature itself doth mock me!

But now—oh, joy!—again I hear sweet sounds—
The hunter's bugle-horn thrills loud and clear!
Beautifully with the musical, sighing waves
Its lovely music blends! Alas! and yet—
In chase away. I'm saved! I'm saved!

DRAGON.—There is a regular form usually adopted in making wills, but it could be varied. Any person can make a will without the assistance of a solicitor, but it is better to employ one. Forms for making soldiers' wills are set out in the "Rules and Regulations for the Army."

MAYNE CHANTON. who is seventeen years of age, rather petite, with dark hair and eyes, and will have upon her marriage a dowry of 40000 l. would like to correspond, with a view to a speedy union, with a gentleman from twenty to twenty-three years of age.

J. C. R.—The indentures of an apprentice have full force of law over him until he has completed the period of service for which they covenant, irrespective of the amount of wages stipulated to be paid to him during his apprenticeship.

X. Y. Z.—The circumstance of a married man dying intestate in a state of lunacy would give his relatives no stronger rights in the division of his property than are accorded in the case of a sane person dying intestate. They must divide with the widow.

ROSE C., who is twenty-three years of age, fair, and is thoroughly domesticated and fond of music, is desirous of receiving matrimonial overtures from a gentleman about twenty-six years of age; good looks not absolutely essential, the possession of good moral principles being preferred.

A. S.—As regards the handwriting, there is no question that it would fully qualify you for a clerkship. We could feel obliged if you would not adopt the designations of "Subscriber," "Constant Reader," &c., as we cannot reply to them under such indelicate signatures.

O. A. B.—The resistance to combination of the mixture of chlorine and hydrogen, which is overcome by exposure to light, can be increased by various circumstances. The presence of a very small quantity of foreign gas in the standard mixture of chlorine and hydrogen is sufficient to cause the resistance to be increased to a very great extent. An excess of 993 of hydrogen reduced the action from 100 to 38.

ALBERTA and **LIONEL** wish to correspond matrimonially and exchange cards with a fair, dark, gentleman respectively. "Alberta" is twenty years of age, of medium height, has golden hair, blue eyes, is thoroughly domesticated, and has expectations. "Lionel" is eighteen years of age, rather tall, fair, with blue eyes, very lively, accomplished, and domesticated.

ACROD. who is twenty-eight years of age, of medium height, has dark brown hair and blue eyes, has travelled in nearly all parts of the world, and is a professor of Indian

languages, wishes to correspond, with a view to a speedy marriage, with a lady, who must be under thirty years of age, a member of the Church of England, and have a small business or a little money; beauty no object, or a widow not objected to.

BORN wishes to correspond matrimonially with a gentleman 5 ft 10 in. in height, good looking, dark, and possessing 2000 l. per annum. "Belle," who is good looking, and rather stout, with a view to matrimony, with "Rosalie McLeod," has a small income herself of 500 l. per annum.

NELLY and **BESSIE** wish to correspond with two gentlemen, with a view to matrimony. "Nelly" is eighteen years of age, 5 ft 3 in. in height, and dark; is well educated, and thoroughly domesticated. "Bessie" is seventeen years of age, 5 ft 4 in. in height, amiable, and well educated.

CLARA ALBERTA W.—To parody the form of criticism once used by Goldsmith, we may say that the lines entitled "Summer's Dead" would be better had the writer taken more pains. They evince considerable imagination, which only requires careful regulation and compression, within the orthodox rules of poetical composition.

KIRBY, whose age is twenty-four, and who belongs to the musical profession, but would prefer a simple domestic life, having domesticated tastes, is considered good looking, and is well educated, would be happy to correspond matrimonially with a gentleman who would value such qualities more than the possession of money.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.—A daughter of Israel, accomplished and domesticated, responds to the appeal of "Gersham Hebrew," with whom she will be happy to confidentially exchange cards and addresses.

C. M., who is twenty years of age, responds to "H. S." the German Hebrew, with whom she would be happy to exchange addresses, &c., with a view to a speedy union, being of the same ancient faith. Is 5 ft. 6 in. in height, with large dark, expressive eyes; is rather inclined to embonpoint, and has travelled much in the Tropical Parts of the world.

M. M. would be most happy to correspond with "Annie." Is twenty-four years of age; 5 ft 7 in. in height, has dark hair, blue eyes, and dark complexion, and is steady and fond of home.

S. T. would be most happy to exchange cards and correspondence with "matrimony," with "Rosalie McLeod." Is twenty-five years of age, and all that "Rosalie" specifies. Has a profession, and an income of 6000 l. per annum.

MARGARET replies to "Harry W." the vacancy in whose home and heart she is willing to fill. Is twenty-one years of age, tall, dark, and prepossessing, and is very fond of music, vocal and instrumental. (The handwriting is lady-like.)

R. H. would be happy to exchange cards with "Desolate." Is nineteen years of age, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, of fair complexion, and is considered good looking.

W. J. M. offers himself to "Octavia." Is nineteen years of age, 5 ft 8 in. in height, of fair complexion, and will have 4000 l. per annum when of age.

HARRY S. will be happy to open a matrimonial correspondence with either "Anna" or "Lizzie." Is twenty-two years of age, and fair, is in a good position, with good prospects, and is very respectably connected.

ANNA would accept "J. R." far better for "Rosie." Is twenty-one years of age, home-loving and industrious. "Shamrock" would like to correspond matrimonially with "A Violet." Is a member of a high profession, but defers particulars.

FRANK will be happy to enter on a matrimonial engagement with "Bramble." Is twenty-four years of age, and possesses all the personal graces desiderated.

W. T. H. wishes "Bessie" to be informed that he will be happy to correspond with her matrimonially. Is nineteen years of age, 5 ft 9 in. in height, and fair, and has tolerably good prospects.

T. R. and **J. H. O.** will be happy to correspond and exchange cards with "Cressy" and "Octavia." T. R. is twenty-one years of age, 5 ft 7 in. in height, dark, and distinguished. J. H. O. is twenty-two years of age, 5 ft 4 in. in height, and tolerably good looking.

SEARAZZA would like to correspond and exchange cards with "G. W." with a view to matrimony. Is seventeen years of age, rather good looking, is of a gentle and loving disposition, and thoroughly domesticated.

JANE R. who is seventeen years of age, of fair complexion, with light brown hair and blue eyes, of medium height, considered very pretty, and possesses an excellent temper, has no objection to correspond with "A. P." with a view to matrimony.

SIR RAOUL offers himself to "Octavia" or "Violet." Is twenty years of age, 5 ft 7 in. in height, fair, considered very good looking, is of good birth, has good prospects, and will be glad to exchange cards. (The writing is tolerably good.)

O. begs to inform "Emma H." that he would gladly correspond matrimonially with her. Is twenty-eight years of age, 5 ft. in height, of dark complexion, with black hair and whiskers, gentlemanly in appearance, and considered handsome.

J. C. R. offers himself to "E. O." Is 5 ft 7 in. in height, dark, with black hair, whiskers, and moustache, and in pretty good circumstances.

JERRY and **LIZZY** would like to correspond matrimonially and, as a preliminary, exchange cards with "Chip" and "Tom." The former, who is tall, dark, accomplished, and domesticated, preferring "Chip," who is 5 ft 2 in. in height, and dark, and is fond of home, having a preference for "Tom." has a moderate income and is a steady

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